

The SL Arts and Life Magazine

reZ

d e c e m b e r 2 0 1 4

Cloudpainter
with Jami Mills

The Dream Machine
dreamt by Art Blue

Cat Q
Cat Boccaccio

The Beginning of Life
by Sedona Mills

POETRY/MICROFICTION
BLAIR/GUYOT/MARINER

Wild, Wild West
by Hitomi Tamatzui

The Perfect Gentleman
Harry Bailey with Friday Blaisdale

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- **Mistake** Crap Mariner rarely makes mistakes, so we were surprised to read that he's clumsy just like the rest of us.
- **Cat Questionnaire** The victim of Cat Boccaccio's daring challenge is SL artist, Toysoldier Thor, who willingly takes her bait.
- **Cloudpainter** Painter paula cloudpainter has her head in the clouds and shares with us what it is that's so fascinating about them.
- **The Beginning of Life - Chapter Eight: Closure (Part One)** Sedona Mills offers her action-packed two-part climax to the cyber/espionage futuristic thriller that we never want to end.
- **The Dream Machine** Art Blue has fallen hard for the woman of his dreams, but he's quite a fish himself. Maybe she's the dreamer.
- **The Perfect Gentleman Enjoys the Holidays** Harry Bailey and Friday Blaisdale explore some of the finer things that SL has to offer the discerning connoisseur, but good friends always seem to be at the top of their holiday list.
- **The Wild, Wild West** Hitomi Tamatzui brings the wild West sims to life using vivid descriptions and her fabulous photography.
- **The Holocaust Dress** Adrian Blair offers a superb poem that is both bewildering and heartbreaking.

About the Cover: Painter paula cloudpainter has looked at clouds from every possible vantage point and it's her passionate love affair with clouds (just look at her gorgeous painting that graces our cover this month) that endears us to her. We look forward to many cloudy days ahead so we can enjoy her unique vision of those lovely wisps of fluff.



Best Wishes For
a Happy Holiday From
The Perfect Gentleman



Happy Holidays

from



performances at midnight

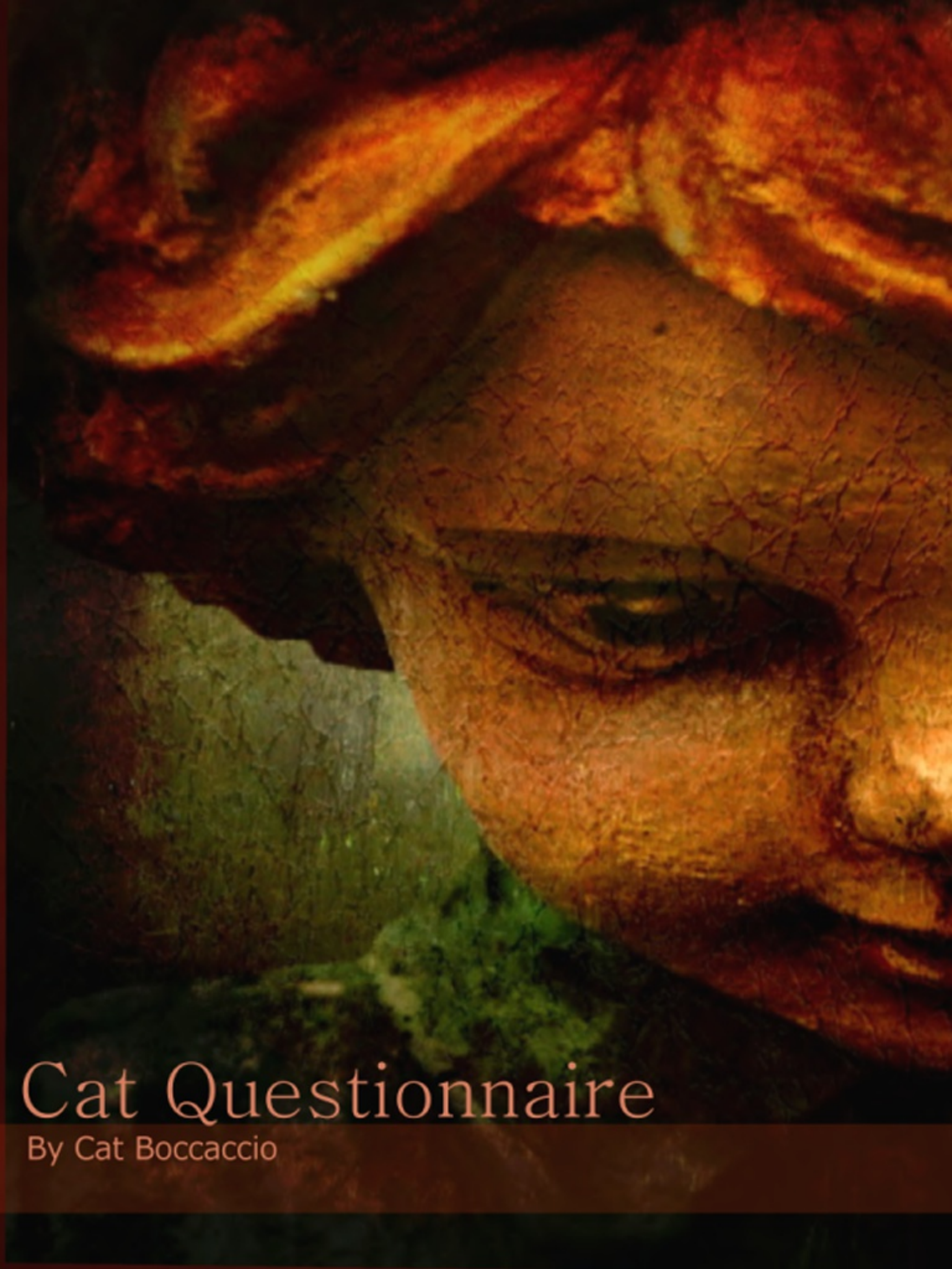
days

rebirth

square



ght on December 5th, 12th, 19th, and 24th at Idle Rogue



Cat Questionnaire

By Cat Boccaccio



Toysoldier Thor

Toysoldier Thor

This month, artist Toysoldier Thor dares to answer Cat's 14 leading questions.

SL Date of Birth: January 23, 2008

SL activity:

- SL landscape terrain pack builder merchant
- Digital Artist (SL, RL, Mesh Statues, mixed art)
- Karaoke singer
- Lover / fan of live performer / musicians
- Lover / fan of the SL Artistic Dance community
- blogger / SL / LL critic :)

RL location: Manitoba Canada

In-your-own-words bio: I am a lover of all things happening in SL and engage heavily in many SL interests like Art, Music, Artistic Dance, Building, Creating, Merchant, Exploring, Socializing. Socializing and getting to meet so many amazing people is a key reason for being in SL.

1. What in SL has brought you the most happiness?

The countless interesting and fun people I have met and established friendships with. The strong communities I belong to and interact with. The amazing creativity that exists in SL and how it stimulates my creativity. The amazing entertainment that

can be found EVERY NIGHT in SL. There is simply too much to mention on what brings me happiness in SL.

2. What has given you the most sadness?

Through the countless deep conversations I have had with 1000's of people I have met, SL has made me become aware of just how much physical and emotional abuse so many women in SL have or are going through. I just never realized how large a percentage of women have been or currently are exposed to the abuses from some very emotionally sick men (who should really be labelled as animals). I guess I am glad my eyes opened to how large a problem it is in our society and even how the abuse can happen within the SL virtual relations... but still sad.

3. How would you describe your home in SL?

Hmmmm... Fractured custom built little homes or platforms. Its not a home I would submit to "HOME & GARDEN" for a front page features spot... next question :)

4. Who in SL do you admire most?



There are so many I admire as "MOST" – each with their own unique reason. I couldn't list them all but a few that come to mind would include Domitalia Jinx – my longest closest friend in SL and my Artistic Muse (who was the biggest reason I became the Artist I am not). Liz Harley – the biggest and longest supporter of live music in SL who never complains about RL challenges and gives so much to SL Music. Babypea Von Pheonix – who personifies SL Artistic Dance and has the amazing love, passion, drive to give all she can to express and grow the craft to others.

5. What character trait do you have in SL that is furthest from your RL personality?

Hmmm – I would say that I am not near the flirt in RL that I might be known to be in SL. :)

6. Which character trait did you leave behind in RL?

I really can't think of a trait I left in RL. I pretty much am in SL what I am in RL -- maybe more of it in SL :)

7. What is your weakness when it comes to spending your Linden dollars?

My weakness is that I am not a big spender of \$L in SL. MY largest expenditure in SL is tipping live music venues and singers / musicians. I bet that makes up 90% of what I spend. Most of my \$L is cashed out into RL US\$ where its spent on all my RL toys (new PCs,

larger ultra res monitors, cameras, and other gadgets).

8. What is your favorite place in Second Life, and why?

Another tough question as I cannot say I have ONE. I guess I would say what is my fave is based on where I tend to TP to the most. As such I guess KeyWest Resort, my own art gallery and meadow, and the O-Lounge – even though I have not visited as much recently.

9. What scares you the most in (or about) Second Life?

Its slow erosion of popularity and all those things that made SL as exciting as it was back when I first existed in SL. With all the new tech features, lag and bake fails continue to get worse even though LL believes they are improving things. The SL economy is not as robust and declining. Sims are being abandoned. Amazing popular well known builds / sims keep shutting down. And more RL restrictions are impacting the operation of SL negatively. So I hate seeing SL slowly sliding. Will SecondLife 2 be the savior?? Based on LL's history... I will have to see it to believe.

10. What is your secret pleasure in SL?

LOL I would think what most would be thinking regarding this question is not too secret... so what is truly my secret pleasure in SL? That the very few members that are considered my closest

friends are always there for me when I need them and that I can trust.

11. What would it take to drive you out of Second Life?

If the communities I love collapsed or if SecondLife 2 is so amazingly better than SL that I want to be part of it.

12. What one word would you use to describe the art community in SL?
BREATH TAKING.

13. What are you most proud of in SL?

How much I have learned and accomplished during my time in SL. Accomplishments with so many communities in SL.

14. If you built a sim from scratch with unlimited resources, what would it be called?

The Toybox.

For more information about Toysoldier and his exhibits, visit his website:

<http://ToysoldierThor.com>



love your body

body love

Natural shapes with skin included.

Marketplace:<https://marketplace.secondlife.com/stores/21020>

photography
jami mills





Cloudpainter

by J
with



Jami Mills | including an interview
with paula cloudbainter

*‘I’ve looked at clouds from both sides now,
From up and down, and still somehow
It’s cloud’s illusions I recall
I really don’t know clouds at all.’*

Joni Mitchell, *From Both Sides Now*

To some, a cloud is a visible mass of condensed water vapor floating in the atmosphere high above the ground. To others, a cloud is an ominous omen of gloom, suspicion, trouble and worry. To paula cloudpainter (aka palua31atnight), a cloud is something magical, something “alive, moving, part of the planet.”

paula, who hails from the beautiful hills of Vermont, wears her passion in her nametag: cloudpainter. There is something wonderful about finding such a pure calling, capturing the ethereal textures of clouds, helping us see them in a new light - - from up and down. Clouds, like snowflakes, are unique physical phenomena, ever-changing kinetic forms, uncontainable, unknowable. One can capture them only in a photograph or, in paula’s case, a painting, but such representations are poor substitutes for the real thing. Once you see paula’s cloud paintings, new clouds form in the viewer’s imagination...and they too are kinetic, uncontainable, unknowable. paula seeds her clouds with paint, and they change forms before our eyes, lifting off her canvases and into our

minds’ eyes.

Over the years, many an SL artist has graced our pages - - fractal artists, performance artists, immersive installation artists. SL provides such a variety



of tools for the searchers and creators among us. paula cloudpainter, on the other hand, uses that old standby, the paint brush, to give life to her creations, although lately she has been in-

corporating into oils and watercolors some of the techniques that have amused and challenged so many artists here in SL (and enthralled their devotees). paula at heart “lives in a box of paints,” but maybe because to paula



a cloud is a living thing, she is now experimenting with some of those digital tools, and animating some of her pieces. Now they too are living things.

You'd be wrong to think that clouds are the only things paula paints. There are some seascapes and forests in her exhibit as well. You might be surprised, however, to discover that her most recent piece is most un-cloudlike: an elephant! Inspired by Voodoo Shilton's rendition of *Elephant Strut*, paula has taken the images Voodoo stimulated in her imagination, and rendered them on canvas. Voodoo, who has become a fan of paula's work, was very complimentary of her work when I ran into him recently at the Whinlatter Galleries. As we both gazed upon paula's colorful elephant painting (Voodoo: “Purple elephants now seem quite normal to me after seeing this piece”), the elephant in the last frame could be seen lumbering (okay, “strutting”) along at a good clip. And so paula has opened an entirely new area for future expression.

To entice to you make a trip to her gallery, I include below an interview with the artist herself:

Jami Mills: So, first of all ... thank you, paula, for coming over and making yourself available to our readers.

paula cloudpainter: Thank you for having me, Jami.

Jami Mills: What is your earliest recollection of the joy you feel putting lines on paper?





paula cloudpainter: I grew up around art. My mother was a painter and my father an engineer and draftsman, so creating things and putting lines on paper are part of who I am. Creating art is included in my very earliest memories. It was in 3rd and 4th grade that I really discovered the true joy of making those marks start to look the way I wanted on the page. I was designated as the “class artist”, which I was lucky enough to enjoy all the way through college.

Jami Mills: Has art been a lifelong pursuit of yours, or have you come to it later in life?

paula cloudpainter: I’ve always wanted

to be a painter. Expressing my view of the world is important to me and art gives me a voice. I love everything about being an artist... the rewards,





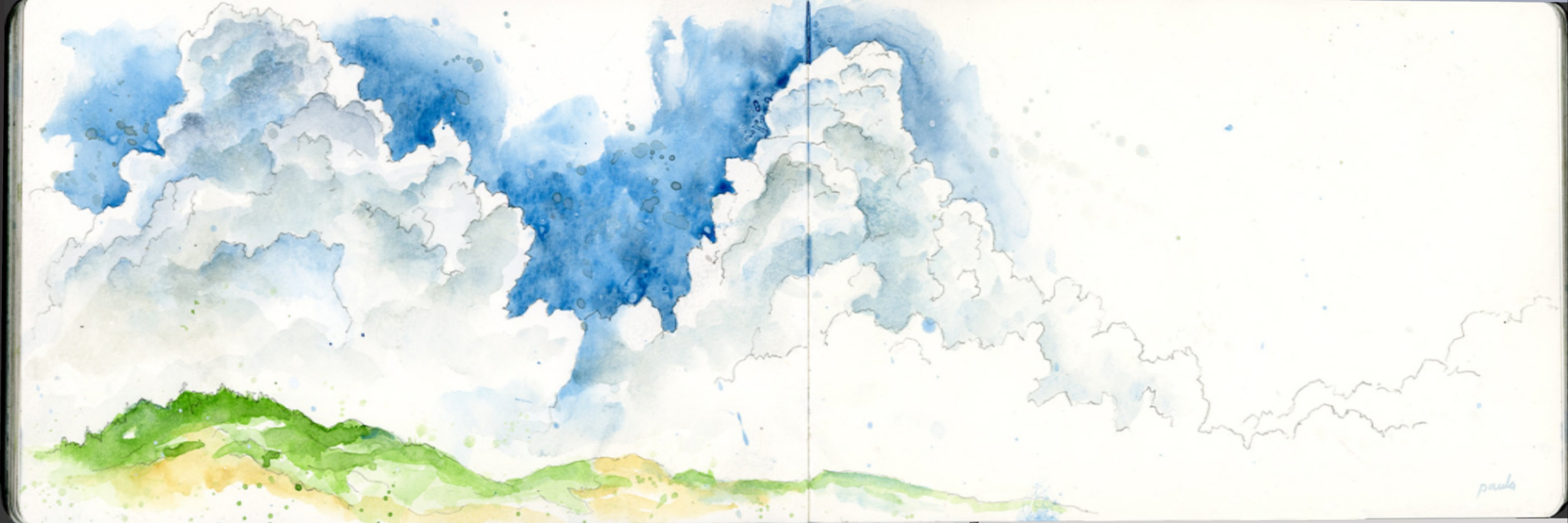
the challenges. I find the work and ideas to be never ending with always something new to try. I find the life-style to be exciting, romantic, unique

and a perfect match to my quirky personality. I realize the power of images and try to use them to create or at least aspire to a better world. I want to create more than just “pretty pictures” ... I want to paint canvases that show how I feel about the subject. I create art every day and in almost any setting, my studio, the beach, mountainsides, museums, cafes ... I like to make sure I have a sketchbook with me at all times.

Jami Mills: Do you remember your first cloud painting?

paula cloudpainter: Very vividly. I was in the Berkshires ... using pastels to





capture an afternoon sky. The clouds became the main subject matter in one of my works for the first time. The afternoon light was changing quickly and I knew I wanted to draw past sunset without starting new drawings, so I decided to create divisions on the paper for one hour intervals to capture the change in the clouds and light as the afternoon went into dusk. I had set up my French easel at what I didn't realize was a popular sunset viewing spot, so by the last third of the drawing I had an audience of about 20 people, sharing their wine with me and watching, cheering me on, as I recorded the fleeting sunset onto the paper. That drawing inspired me to make clouds and timescapes my life's work.

That experience came on the heels of being introduced to a film *Koyaan-isqatsi*, scored by one of my favorite composers Philip Glass. The film speaks to how humanity has grown away from nature and has created an environment that is "out of balance." Within the film is footage of cloudscapes using time lapse photography. The message of the entire film had a

tremendous impact on my life and the cloud sequences fueled my imagination in ways to paint and describe the movement of clouds.

Jami Mills: There is such a variety of clouds, from angry thunderheads to the wispy cirrus. Which are your favorites and why?

paula cloudpainter: I love and paint them all. Each type of cloud offers a different mood, palette, chance of expression. I prefer to paint clouds that show transitions...light, movement, shape. I like observing and capturing those transitions. My very favorites are the crisp cumulus towers that grow in the thermals of a warm summer day. They're sculptural, ever-changing, and so graphic in nature when set against a pure blue sky. The translucent texture of cirrus clouds provide a subject that is subtle and delicate, which at times suites my mood perfectly.

Jami Mills: Some religions have associated clouds with the divine. Heaven is often depicted as resting on clouds. You seem to have an almost religious reverence for clouds. Do you connect with them on a spiritual level?

paula cloudpainter: Clouds embody the way I try to live my life. Spontaneous, changing, sometimes filled with energy, sometimes quiet. Each time I paint them, I connect with the clouds and the planet on a very spiritual level. I see their role in the water cycle and keeping the planet alive. I like thinking of where they've been and where they are going. At times clouds have been a metaphor in my work. I've used clouds to speak about things going on in my life such as the canvas *Flying Free*, in which the clouds represent myself moving on from a situation.

Jami Mills: Some of your renderings of clouds resemble the billows of smoke we sometimes see in cataclysmic forest fires. Have you ever considered the similarities?

paula cloudpainter: I've noticed the similarities and the dichotomy between

the destructive force and the sculptural aspect of the thick cumulus-like smoke. With fires, my concern is so much for the people, property and trees that it would be too difficult to see past that to ever paint them. The similarities that I am considering painting are the billowing clouds coming from industrial smokestacks. There is one in particular that is set off on a highway, in the middle of a forest. The strange isolated setting alone is such a contrast. During the day I've seen it sending out clouds of smoke with similar cumulus clouds behind it, echoing the smoke in every way. And at night, it's lit up and the smokestack clouds take on the most surreal look. Trying to reconcile the similarities and dichotomy between natural clouds and these man-made clouds is something I want to attempt on future canvases.



Jami Mills: You seem to have a particular fascination with the billowy cumulonimbus clouds. Where does that come from? How do you connect with that particular variety of cloud?

Paula Cloudpainter: I love the energy and movement contained in cumulonimbus clouds. Knowing how high those clouds can get into the atmosphere, the force of the wind as well as the rain and snow that is occurring within them, I find very exciting. Sometimes when painting them I can feel the energy of the gathering storm on the surface of my skin. If I weren't a painter I might have been a storm chaser.

Jami Mills: What particular technique do you employ when painting clouds? Do you use brushes, sponges, other techniques?

Paula Cloudpainter: In addition to my brushes I might use a rag or the back of my hand when painting in watercolor or drawing with pastels. In oils it's entirely brush work, sometimes trying to capture a certain passage or movement of a cloud in a single brushstroke. I like to work quickly and spontaneously.

Jami Mills: What are the different media to create in? Oils, watercolors? Pastels? Acrylics?

Paula Cloudpainter: I enjoy so many



different media. The pure color, application of paint and the give of a canvas really attracts me to oil paint. Oils allow me to work in my studio on 4' x 6' or 4' x 8' canvases. The scale of large works like that excites me. Oils allow for reworking of entire sections and lend themselves to more involved exploration. I also like not having to put the oil paintings under glass, as I prefer the viewer being able to get right up to the work without the separation of glass. Watercolors provide a spontaneous medium that I can take on location and is very suited to con-



veying the light and atmosphere of clouds. Pastels give me a saturation of color in a drawing medium that, like watercolors, is easy to work with on location.

I also paint digitally using Photoshop as my main program and a Wacom tablet that I have customized to work the same way I do with my natural brushes. I sometimes start from scratch on a blank canvas and dive right in. Occasionally I might lay a texture or one of my photographs underneath and paint right on top. Second

Life is the perfect place to experiment with animating and creating 3-dimensional digital versions of those canvases, which in turn has influenced my physical canvases in ways that I'm just beginning to explore.

Jami Mills: I was at a recent show of David Hockney, who lately has been experimenting with creating works on iPads. Some pieces are quite stunning. Have you explored using different techniques here in SL? Are the things you can use in SL to create or enhance your art that are unavailable in RL?

paula cloudpainter: First thing ... I love David Hockney's work. His Polaroid photo montages, the portraits and landscapes, have had a huge impact on my work. He was inspired by the way the moon was photographed in sections, and then pieced together. That style of "piecing" and looking at the landscape in sections is a technique I use to create motions, talk about the progress of time, and interject other elements into the canvas. I haven't seen his iPad work. I need to, because after creating a few recent pieces here, I was trying to think of a way of bringing out into my physical canvases. And iPods and iPads was one way I was thinking of. They are quite expensive, so I was considering those digital frames that you can load images into - - as many or as few as you want - - and then embed them into my canvases. So the techniques from SL

that I've really explored, or am starting to, are the 3-D aspects of my canvases, to push the time aspect further, or the new animations. I have a good friend, Isadora Alaya, who has written amazing scripts for me for my canvases. That is one of the most exciting aspects of SL techniques that I want to explore.

Jami Mills: The animations you have been incorporating into your recent works give them a wonderful kinetic quality. When did this brainstorm hit you and how to do incorporate it into your work? How do you work with Isadora?

Paula Cloudpainter: The idea of animating my cloudscares has been in my mind for many years. I didn't really pursue it until I saw some of the possibilities in SL, and how I might incorporate sections that are animated with still sections. Or layer them. All of this with an eye towards talking about time, change, how things move.



Jami Mills: You pay homage to Rene Magritte's The Human Condition in your fabulous piece Flying Free (on the cover of this article). In any collection of Magritte, you'll immediately notice he had the same fascination with clouds that you have. They dominate his work and are one of his most recognizable motifs. Do you include Magritte as one of your influences?

Paula Cloudpainter: Magritte's work has influenced me from the very first time I saw his work as a child. It captured my imagination and I used to

(well.. still do) see scenes as I walk around that he would love ... juxtapositions and impossible settings that occur, either reflected in a glass window on a train ... through a window where a TV is playing ... or just something purely out of my imagination, like his train coming out of a fireplace. M.C. Escher is another artist who created those types of impossible settings that I loved growing up.

Jami Mills: What is a cloud to you?

paula cloudpainter: Hmmmm ... It's

alive ... moving ... part of the planet. I know the scientific definition. To me, though, it's more. And I love seeing the photos from space, where it looks like the earth is draped in the clouds.

Jami Mills: An altogether different perspective.

paula cloudpainter: Very beautiful, it is. I was just telling a friend in SL that I want to be the first painter in space (lol) or the first one to paint a landscape on Mars.



Jami Mills: They're living things for you.

paula cloudpainter: Yes, they are. I get to see them all the time, too.

Jami Mills: I see similarities in some of your work with the exuberance of Maxfield Parrish, who also rendered clouds in a dramatic fashion (see Ecstasy). Is he an influence as well?

paula cloudpainter: I also love Parrish's work and paint many of the same scenes that he painted. I love the sculptural way he rendered clouds. So majestic and dimensional, the same way N.C Wyeth painted them.

Jami Mills: He paints clouds with an almost religious reverence.

paula cloudpainter: Yes. Almost an altar-like backdrop.

Jami Mills: Very dramatic, just like some of your works.

paula cloudpainter: His palette was amazing, the colors of his skies. He really captured that feeling when you look up and see that contrast.

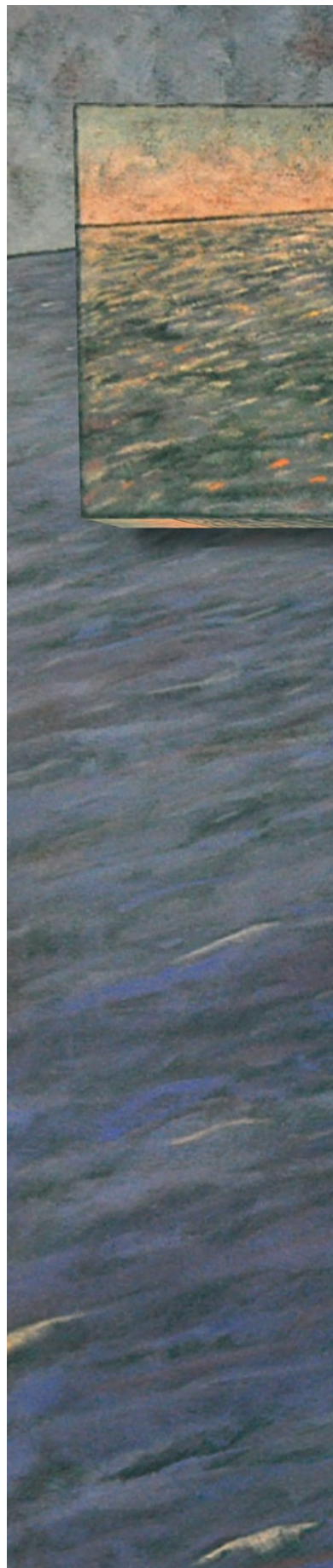
Jami Mills: You bring a 3-dimensional quality to your work by raising rectangles above the surface of your painting. It's as if you want to bring the clouds into the exhibit space itself. Where did this inspiration come from?

paula cloudpainter: I wanted to add to the "passage of time" element in some way. One way was to have the landscape "move away" from you as the day progressed.

Jami Mills: It's very effective. It turns something otherwise static into something very dynamic.

paula cloudpainter: Thank you :) I really enjoy Josef Albers squares, the color studies he did. Just by use of color. I like to think of those as I work with my canvases now. I have a few in the works that echo the proportions of Albers pieces and use clouds as the vehicle instead of the pure color he used. So I guess the overall idea of things coming at you and receding with a physical canvas is another aspect that SL brings that is very difficult to recreate in physical canvasses.

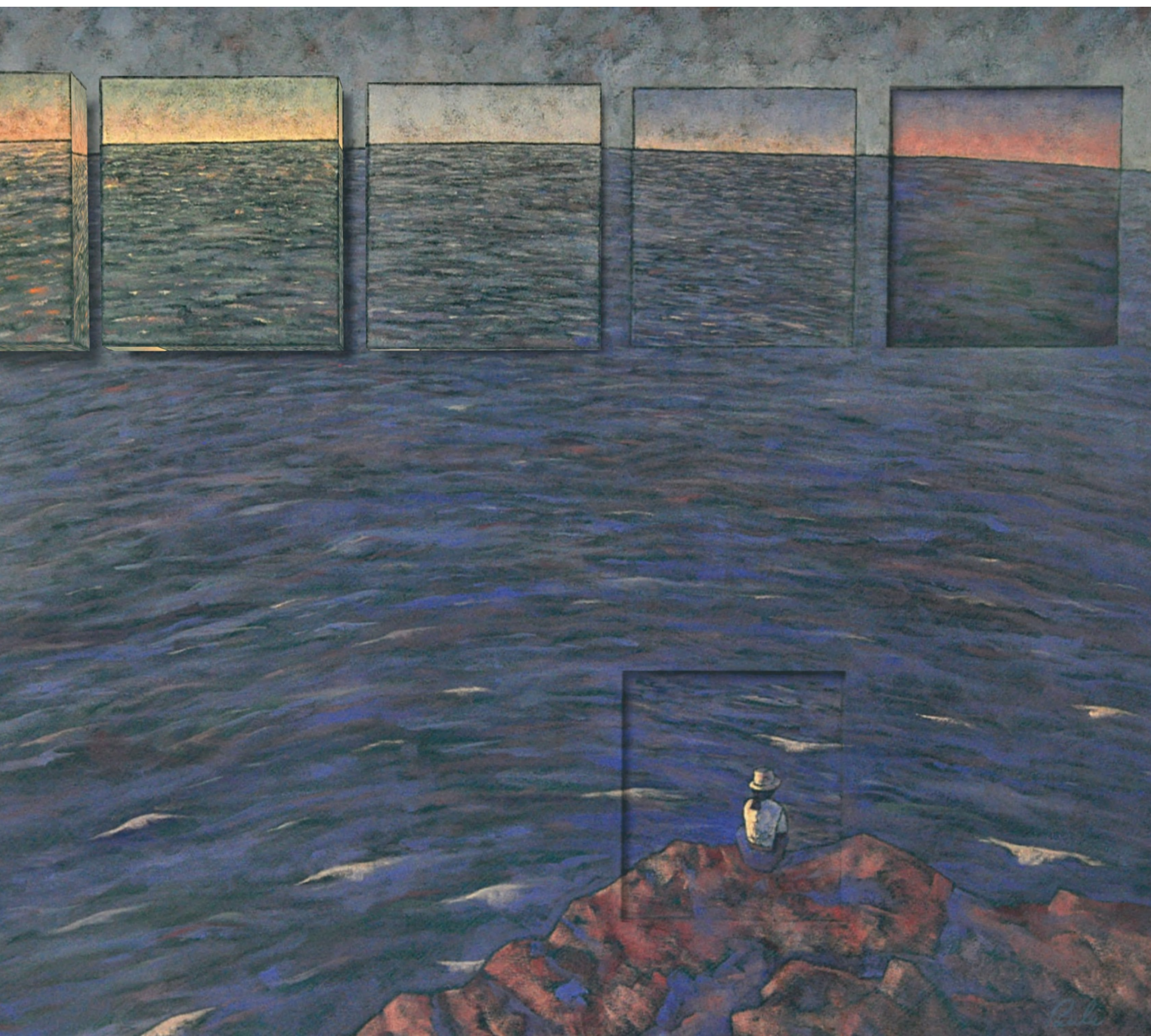
Jami Mills: You've also painted waterscapes with the same finesse as your clouds (I'm thinking of Spend the Day with Me). Does capturing water present similar challenges as clouds?



paula cloudpainter: I think water is much more difficult to capture on canvas. When I am painting water, I try to paint the light dancing on it. I look to painters like Monet and how they described water. Or Homer. I still struggle with water, though I don't shy away from it. It's usually a minor player on a canvas, with the exception of a piece like *Spend the Day*.

Jami Mills: You've exhibited some pages of your sketchbook. Do you like sketching and do these entries in your sketchbook have particular meaning to you?

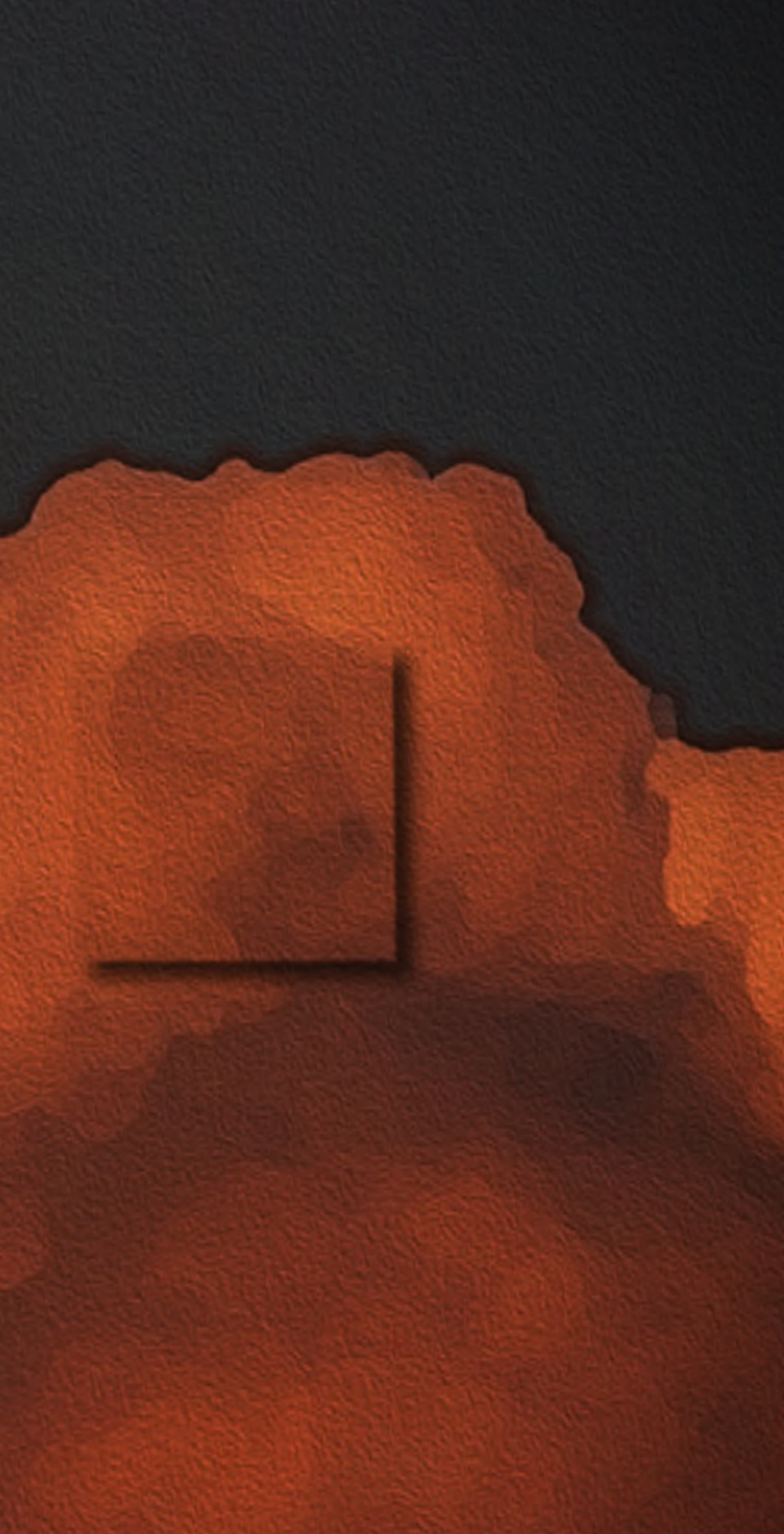
paula cloudpainter: I love the freedom, energy and spontaneity of sketching. I usually don't take a camera everywhere to make sure that I sketch instead. I don't paint from photographs. I often





create larger canvases from my sketches. Each sketch is a record of that moment ... so each one means a lot to me. They've become my visual journals. The sketches in the gallery are all from Cape Cod, which is one of my sanctuaries, and I spend weeks at a time painting there.

Jami Mills: There is a loneliness to some of your work. In one of your sketchbook series, there is a isolated lighthouse, and in Spend the Day With Me, there is a figure sitting alone contemplating the expanse of Nature. Joni Mitchell's lyric from I Could Drink a Case of You, "Oh, I am a lonely painter ... I live in a box of paints" apply to you?



paula cloudpainter: Yes :) I found out early on that being an artist means being alone. One of my favorite artists, Robert Henri, wrote a book, *The Art Spirit*. In it he said those words. He said an artist's life is about working alone and that they get to enjoy it, as well as pay for it, all their lives. One fun thing I get to do

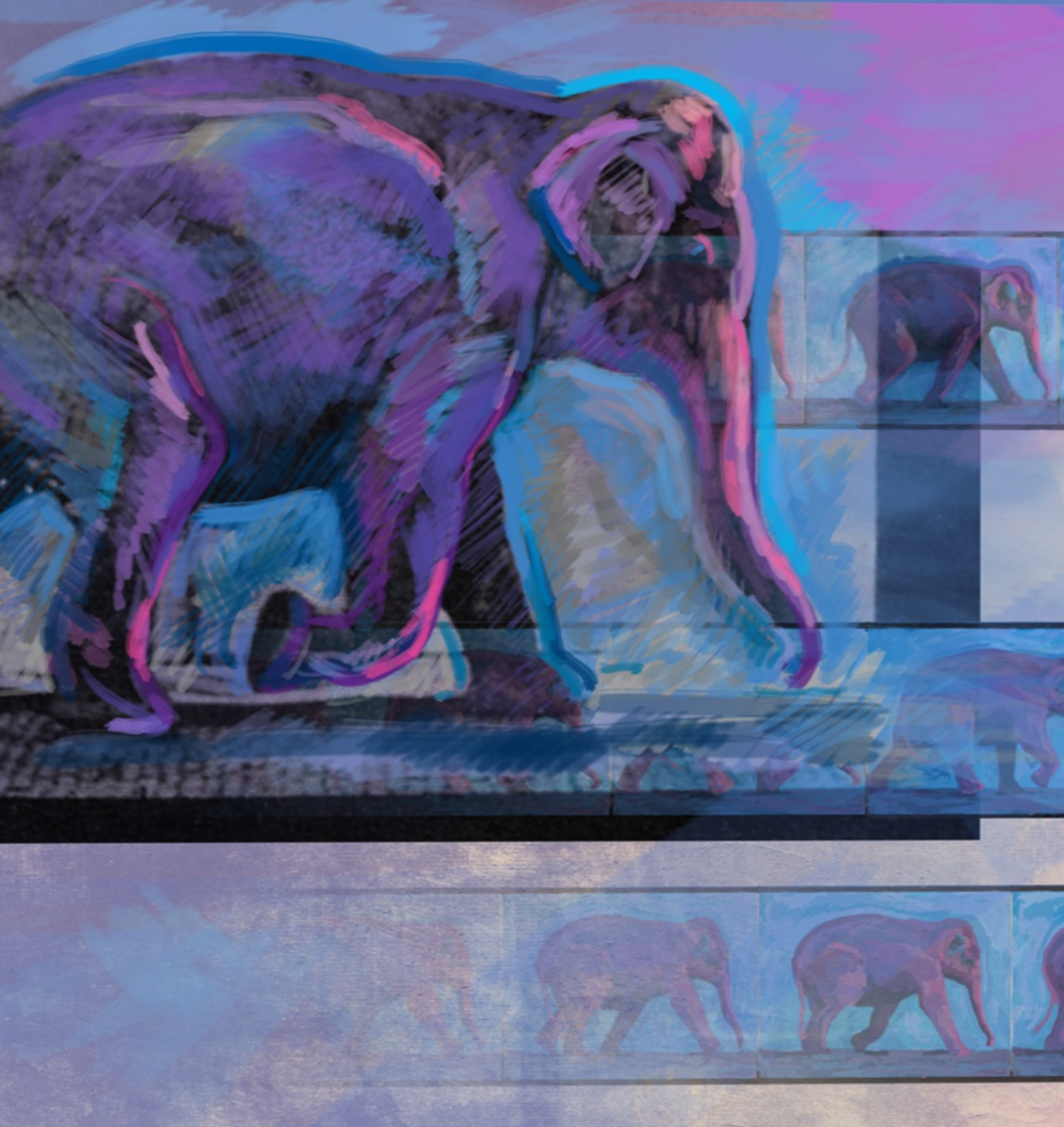
now is while I paint in my studio alone, I can go to live concerts in SL, say hi to my friends, show them my work, talk about the world. That's how I came up with my *Music in Second Life* series. As I would paint, I would listen to Voodoo Shilton playing *Elephant Strut* and see images in my head of the song as a painting.

Jami Mills: Voodoo is a great friend of rez, too. We featured him in a cover article in our April 2012 issue. Tell me more about the Music in Second Life series.

paula cloudpainter: I have sketches and ideas on about a dozen paintings from SL musicians like Voodoo. I enjoy the solitude and I also enjoy being able to come to SL. It's part of what I consider a very magical life (I know that sounds corny ... lol) but it is!

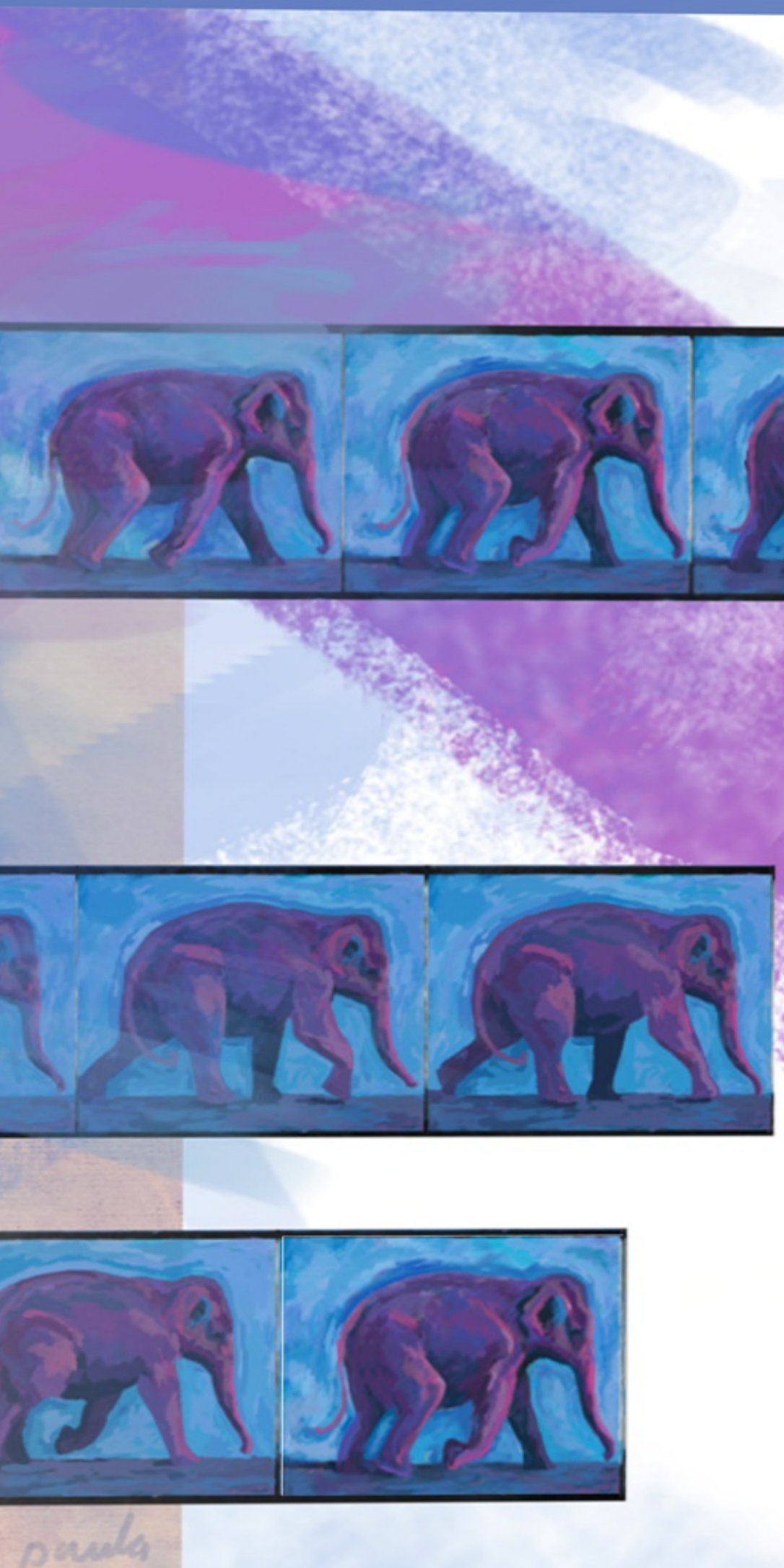
Jami Mills: About Elephant Strut, the piece inspired by Voodoo. It's unlike anything I've seen of yours. Please tell me about its special significance for you and how Voodoo became a fan of your work.

paula cloudpainter: It's a series of songs of musicians that have inspired me to the point I've sketched images from their songs and am going to paint them, the way I did *Elephant Strut*. I approached each musician to ask them if I could use their song, as their name would be on it too, and each one said yes :) *Elephant Strut* was the first SL



song that really inspired me to create the *Music in Second Life* series. Voodoo came to my first opening back in June and saw what my SL name actually meant and thought it was really great. He bought

one of my pieces then and has been such a supporter of my work ever since. The elephants, in addition to the song, have a special meaning to me. Once they are all finished, I'll have a huge show :))



Jami Mills: And maybe some live music to accompany it!

paula cloudpainter: Voodoo thought it would be great to have the musician play

the song as a large version of it is displayed behind them on stage, the idea being that music influences painters ... and painters influence musicians, like Monet and Debussy. I love connection of music and the visual arts.

Jami Mills: paula, thank you so much for being so generous with your time tonight. I'm sure our readers are quite interested in seeing your work now, and this chat has given some very rich background for them to view it. Thank you so much.

paula cloudpainter: It's been so much fun, Jami :) Thank you for your interest in my work :))

dj12Magic is the owner of the Whinlatter Galleries in the Visions of Beauty Art Complex (Whinlatter (143, 39, 79)). To experience paula's "puff pieces," I hope you'll stop by the gallery and look at the range and expanse of her work. Paula has expressed deep gratitude to dj for giving her the opportunity to exhibit her work in such a prestigious SL gallery. And paula has made the most of it, with dozens of her best pieces now on display. For quite some time after wandering through paula's exhibit, you'll not be able to look at clouds, those fragile wisps we so often take for granted, in quite the same way.

• r — e — z •



The Beginning Closure Part C

by Sedona Mills

photography by Lore

A person in a dark suit is floating in a blue, crystalline environment. Large, glowing blue beams of light are visible, creating a sense of depth and movement. The background is a complex, web-like structure of blue lines and nodes.

g of Life:
One

Chapter Eight

en Legion and MyNameIs Legion

William Jones was having a nice afternoon drive. After losing a few hundred credits at the casinos in South Lake Tahoe, he felt he needed to clear his head, take a drive and see if his luck would change on the north side of the lake. Driving up the Lincoln Highway on the Nevada side, he allowed the road to automatically drive the car today while he took in the fresh air and pleasant views of the lake and surrounding mountains.

Things were going well for him on his drive until an alarm went off in his car, bringing him out of his hazy stupor.

The car automatically took action just as William noticed an old beat up Bronco crossing his lane, making what seemed to be a completely illegal u-turn on the four lane highway. Missing the Bronco by inches, his sports car swerved into the oncoming lanes and off the road onto a gravel shoulder, coming to a skidding stop. Breathing deeply, William counted to ten, then shut off the engine, allowing the immediate silence of the world around him to calm him. Looking in his rear view mirror, he saw the Bronco speeding away, its engine whining desperately, urging the vehicle to move faster.



“Jesus, Harry. You almost got us killed,” screamed Dan, as he reached up to grab the hand-hold over the door. Harry replied by pressing the accelerator to the floorboard of his old Bronco, ignoring Dan’s comment altogether.

“Why the hell would Jerry issue an emergency one-alpha at the lab anyway? What could possibly happen there for the security system to do that?” Dan asked Harry.

“Nothing,” Harry replied. “I set up Jerry so she couldn’t issue a one-alpha. Only one of us can issue it.”

“Well, if you and I are here in this truck, who else...?” Dan’s eyes widened as he remembered that earlier Harry was talking about Rhonda also being up at the lake. He realized that only

Harry momentarily glanced at Dan, murmuring, “Shut up, Dan,” as he navigated a curve, barely keeping the speeding Bronco on the road.

Upon hearing the mechanically feminine voice announce that some protocol had initiated, Belinda raised her gun looking about the lab for a sign of what was to come. Almost immediately, the lights in the lab went out, cloaking her in darkness with only the light from the open door to the outside providing any illumination, but only for a moment. After darkness enveloped the lab, a high screeching sound like nails on a chalkboard permeated the room, a few seconds later a bright strobe light commenced flashing all about her.

Knowing a flash-bang when she saw it, Belinda curled herself into the fetal position under the desk, her arms over her head, covering her ears, and tucked her face firmly into her legs just as the device exploded.

Rhonda could have issued the emergency, and swallowed hard, followed by, “Fuck me, Harry! It’s Rhonda! Step on it!”

Belinda didn’t waste any time, and allowing her training to take over, she immediately dove to the floor to gain access under the workstation desk, hoping to gain some cover. As she

crawled under the desk, she saw a flattened cylinder, like a hockey puck, flying through air in the “there it is, there it isn’t” flash of the strobe, almost in a slow motion fashion. Knowing a flash-bang when she saw it, Belinda curled herself into the fetal position under the desk, her arms over her head, covering her ears, and tucked her face firmly into her legs just as the device exploded. The lab was bathed in

The force of the device put Belinda into a mild stupor, her senses now numbed beyond their limits; she felt herself slipping into semi-consciousness. As her body became limp, her mind screamed to wake up, but to no avail. Belinda knew, as her mind started to drift, that she was in trouble. She was afraid.



a concussive sound blast and bright light that she could feel, hear and see, even in her defensive posture.

Stan can't believe the experience he is having. His mind is flooded with Jerry's world. The bio-implants the nanotechnology created in his brain are

fully active. Stan now completely understands that Jerry is not a simulation of life but is indeed, life itself. She is fully aware of herself as a being and while her environment is electronic,

own. Hers is a part of his, built from the beings shared in Stan's mind. Jerry is confused. How could he be there in his world, and be here in her world at the same time? Immediately she knows



her reality is as real to her as Stan's is to him. Stan is now a part of Jerry, and she a part of him. Both minds, biological and electronic, are now one, locked together in a union held together by the electronic implants in his brain.

Jerry is also having the same experience. She realizes that her world is actually inside a much larger world. A world just like hers, but different at the same time. Stan's reality includes her

the answer, his world created hers. The shock of that causes Jerry to recoil a bit from Stan, separating their link momentarily. The short break in their sharing allows Stan's mind to hear the alarm and the security system, in Jerry's voice, proclaiming that an emergency had been sounded in the lab, and that it is taking appropriate action, or a 1A event. Stan immediately recovers the connection with Jerry.

"Jerry, we have to go. We have to separ-

ate the link now. There's an emergency and you may be in danger."

Hearing Stan's thoughts, Jerry replies, "No, I don't want to break the link. There is so much I still don't understand."

"I know, Jerry, and I completely understand your confusion. I'll explain all of this to you later, but now you have to trust me. I cannot break the link, my mind is not able to. You have to break it for the both of us. Please trust me. I think your life may be in danger."

"My life, Stan? What is my life? What am I?" Jerry exclaims.

"Please, Jerry. Trust me. I'll explain all to you, but now you need to break the link. I can get you to safety but I have to get you out of the lab and into Cyber World. You'll be safe there."

"Cyber World?" Jerry asks. "What is that?"

"I don't have time to explain. Please break the link so we can get out of here."

"Leave my home?" Jerry exclaims in her mind, so loud that it causes Stan to mentally wince from the force of her emotional response. "I just can't leave my home."

Stan, now frustrated, pleads. "Jerry, this world may end soon and with us in it. It think I'll survive but I know you won't. Trust me please, Jerry. Break the link now!"



Jerry can feel Stan's anguish and actual fear of leaving her there. She can also feel that he is truly concerned about her safety. But there is so much more to learn. So much more to discover; however, with deep trepidation, Jerry succumbs to Stan's wishes and removes the mental tentacles between her mind and his.

Feeling Jerry's grip slip away, Stan opens his eyes to Jerry staring down at him in her virtual world.

"Thank you," he quietly whispers and



sits up. Now the alarm in his mind, making him fully aware that he is still linked to the security and operating system of the lab, brings him to action.

Getting up to his feet, and helping Jerry to hers, he puts his hands in hers, "Listen, I know this is all new but your world is in danger. I can take you to a much larger world, one where you can

be safe, but you have to hide there until I call for you. Don't bring attention to yourself. Do you understand?"

Jerry squeezes his hands in hers and nods her head, "I do, but not really."

With that, Stan nods his head and keeping one hand in Jerry's, moves to flee.

"Follow me, quickly," he says as they both start to run from Jerry's home.

Locking the brakes up and skidding the Bronco to a stop, Harry shut off the engine and looked out the front window. He surveyed the scene in front of him. The main door to his lab was open, a rock holding it in place. Quietly opening the car door, he motioned to Dan to do the same.

"What are we going to do, Harry?" Dan whispered.

Harry brought his finger to his mouth, motioning Dan to be quiet, as he moved to the rear of the Bronco, and opened the hatch back door in the rear. Dan met him there and watched Harry lift up a canvas tarp, uncovering a shotgun and a pistol. Harry took the pistol, checked that it was loaded, and handed it to Dan. Then he took the shotgun, checked that both barrels were loaded, and put a few more cartridges into his



pocket.

“Shouldn’t we call the police?” Dan asked silently.

Harry looked at him with sarcasm showing in his face, “And tell them what? That we have an illegal experiment going on and somebody is stealing it?”

Dan shrugged, accepting the fact that he and Harry still had to deal with this issue alone. Together they silently

moved to the open door. They saw nobody at the door; Harry let out a sigh of relief as they moved to stand against the building exterior. From inside the open door, both could hear the alarm from the emergency protocol currently in effect.

Breathing deeply from his adrenaline rush, Harry asked, “So, Dan. You ever do anything like this before?”

“No. Have you?” Dan replied to Harry, the small crack in his voice revealing

his anxiety with the situation.

Harry nodded his head back and forth, and Dan sighed deeply. “So what’s the plan? Do we run in with guns blazing?”

“No. We first assess the situation,” Harry said, as he pulled out his phone. He punched in a number and held the phone out so both could hear.

“Who are you calling?” Dan asked.

“Jerry.”

Running together through the lab portal, Jerry’s hand still in Stan’s, they reach the operating system that Stan is so familiar with.

“Jerry!” Stan calls out, looking around at all the other doors, searching for any that may lead to Cyber World.

“Yes, Stan,” is heard from both the virtual person beside him and in his mind from the world he now inhabits. He shakes his head at the comical situation laid out before him. “Who gives their lab rat the same name as their security system,” he thinks to himself.

Jerry jumps upon hearing her own voice spoken, as if coming from everywhere about them, looks at Stan with confusion. With a raised eyebrow, he

informs her she is not the “Jerry” he needs to talk to and continues on.

“Jerry, describe the nature of the alarm, and please can you turn the damn thing off?”

“Welcome back Administrator,” Jerry replies, as the resounding scream that was the alarm becomes silent in his mind. “My internal scanners shows another “presence” logged into my system but I cannot ascertain whom it is. I suspect this is a forced entry into my system and I am commencing security features to expunge the illegal login.”

Immediately Stan yells out, “Jerry, no! Abort security protocol to remove the presence.”

“Abort presence removal. Are you sure you wish me to stop authentication protocol to remove unauthorized access. Please confirm Administrator.”

“Confirmed Jerry. Do not remove unauthorized access. Establish authentication for new presence and allow administrative rights.”

“Establishing authentication on Administrator’s authorization. Please provide login criteria for local account.”

Stan looks at Jerry, who by now is listening to the entire conversation with interest. “Jerry, you have to open

your mind to ... to the world in this domain. Do you understand?"

"No, Stan. I don't understand you. I don't understand any of this. What is this place?"

Seeing the anguish and confusion in Jerry's eyes, Stan replies, "Jerry, this is a part of your world. A part that, in a way, connects your world to mine - - to my physical world. Right now, my mind is connected to your world and

you see me as my mind wishes you to see me, and this place provides a representation of me here. But my world is outside of yours. Do you understand that?"

Remembering the discovery of knowledge about Stan while connected to his mind, she nods, "Yes, I do." Then Jerry, more by instinct than conscious thought, opens her mind to the world around her much in the same manner she used to open her mind to her old



world before her gift. In that moment, Jerry understands. Almost immediately, all information, miniscule in size compared to what Stan possesses, floods into her from the security and operating system called “Jerry.” Experiencing an epiphany of complete understanding, Jerry realizes that she, herself, in some way is connected to this strange world that is not really a world at all. She realizes that she has always been connected to it in some uncoordinated fashion. Linking to the intel-

ligence of this world, Jerry takes control of the security system, which having given her administrative rights, does not fight the intrusion.

Looking at Stan, speaking to him in a more authoritative voice says, “Stan, I am Jerry now. I fully understand this reality I live in. You may now speak to me directly.”

“How did you ...?” Stan replies, his mind’s surprise showing on his virtual face as he looks at Jerry. “Okay, then,” he continues as he grasps the power of the being standing in front of him. “Do I

still have administrative rights to this system?” he asks Jerry.

“Yes, Stan. You do have authentication to administer this environment but I have proxy to override any command I feel would jeopardize its operation. I have acquired the basic need of this system to ensure its integrity is not compromised.”

Nodding his understanding, Stan replies, “Can you provide me the nature of the alarm condition?”

“The alarm condition was initiated by a manual request to engage emergency one-alpha protocols,” Jerry replies immediately.

“What is the nature of such a protocol?”

“A one-alpha emergency is the highest level of an emergency protocol used when authorized access has been discovered. The protocol provides automated initiation of all security measures required to neutralize the unauthorized access to the lab environment.”

Stan considers this for a moment, then asks, “What security measures?”

Jerry replies nonchalantly, “Anti-personnel.”

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After Dark Lounge

At Mai Tai

CONTACT: Meegan Danitz
meegan.danitz@gmail.com
Facebook.com/rhispoem

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ON THE MAI TAI SIM



Come explore our sim with live music shows on
Sundays and Tuesdays!

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Contact Meegan Danitz or Corialote Dougall

A minimalist room with white walls and a wooden floor. A shadow of a person is cast on the right wall. The text is overlaid on the scene.

The Dream Mac

(may contain fish)

by Art Blue

shine



So many stories I have in mind, so much to say. One year ago I met her. You may have heard before that time has no relevance to outline a story that comes out of the future. So it might have been ten years ago or just yesterday. It's only important that it was before now. The sequence of time is all that counts. I was not sure about her when I met her. Not sure even if her gender was true. Now I believe she is female. Proof I have none. Neruval the owl on my shoulder says: "You need no proof when you trust." He is right, of course, as he is an AI. If you don't trust what you have experienced and don't copy this into your code, you haven't learned the lesson that this world has to give you and finally you have to face another round. You, dear reader, may know this, my owl says -- the truth from the books of Michael Newton, *The Destiny of Souls*, is available in your world. Just be patient and wait for nothing specific and it will happen. This is the right time of the year you may think and nothing happens. Maybe next year ...

But time runs now and I want it all. I want it now. I need a picture. I need to fix myself, to hold on a structure. Invisible art is not made for me. It is made for others. I could continue to play Banksy. No need to make it hard any longer, like in the year 2002 with *The Out of Bed Rat* in Los Angeles. It was a torture to hold the saw to cut the seg-

ment out of the concrete wall in a size of 96 x 180 x 17 inches. Now just a simple sketch is all it needs. I make a photo and upload it wherever needed to authenticate that it is a Banksy. Then it moves from rubbish to glory. Neruval has access on all servers in your world, and in a blink of an eye I am a multi-millionaire.

All the beauties on earth will faint when meeting me in case they know. But I want to go the hard way. No one shall know the invisible artist. I will not tell on robinbanksy.com who he is. Paul Horner is not the guy. I just control him. He is an Alt. Alternate reality avatar. 75,280 have sent an IM to him since last rez. I need to set him on auto-response.

But this story is not about me. It is about her. I need a picture. I want to shorten the time to wait. So I logged in to this world where still much effort is needed to create. A world running on chat speed. In the advanced world where I live all can be experienced, you may say, "on a mouse-click." A few years before you might have said "on a wing move of a butterfly." Soon you will say "in a centisecond," as in a coming world called High Fidelity, actions are completed in this time frame.

You need a bridge to digest all this talk, to become a believer? What about George Bloom? Would he be good

enough to resolve your reservations? You believe in Hollywood? You are an actor, an actress? You want to be one? Time has passed but the dream stays? I shall make you believe using the ways you are used to. A TED talk by George Bloom from CBS takes you in 14 minutes to the future of the Metaverse <http://is.gd/georgebloom>



Everything will change in film production. Just some years ahead many things will speed up.

In our world, we get things on a “femto.” On a femto is not really a femtosecond, but it is quite fast, a world in a universal code box it is, running 24/7 for an inhabitant like me. All are happy, but I don’t like to be happy this way. I don’t know why I am so different. Maybe because once I might

upstream and downstream with equal proficiency. I don't need to tell you or Art that Pisces is the last sign of the Zodiac, meaning this fish is the wisest of them all.” Art can be everywhere, so who are you and who is Art? Is it me?

Maybe that’s why I selected “This may contain fish” for my private collection of old Digital Art, made by Maya Paris. It is said that the artist got the idea to name her work this way after she unpacked a piece of salmon and the package imprint was “This may contain fish.” I believe she is a reborn Jean Tinguely, or living in the same cluster sphere so the vibrations of this artist guide her. I have not met her, so I can’t say what colour the cluster has and on what level the spherical voices play their sounds. I just see it, and some readers may see it, also by looking on the moves of her objects, by noticing

...she unpacked a piece of salmon and the package imprint was “This may contain fish.”

have been a fish, as the Newfoundlanders say “fish or no fish.” In this saying, it is all about fish, the endurance, the struggle for fresh and clear water. I found a note in a treasure box but who is meant in this note I don’t know: “I am an intrepid fish that swims both

the enchanting way of using colour, by listening to the gurgling sounds that come out. She is a “fish” or let’s say she is a “fish of art.”

I go for the hard way, so my way may - it may - contain fish. I log in to a simu-



lator that was set-up in the past. One of the oldest ever. I am an archivist. But even as an archivist I can't experience how life has been in the past in native mode, when life in the simulator happened with high lag and some sudden crash, where one got banned from logins if something was done that didn't conform to the TOS.

Nerual is very skeptical and cares about my health. I promised him to do the daily extended exercises: running, skating, skiing, swimming. I eat freshly made healthy food. I look stunning for my age, but this has no meaning for me now. I am an archivist. Now I sit as usual in front of a screen. Screens are gone far along. No light by LCD emitters comes out any longer and goes then in my pupils. The screen I see dir-

ect tuned into my mesh human body. So I can keep my eyes closed. This gives an even brighter, clearer picture. I simulate a keyboard and a mouse and a pad the same way. I start Windows. It is not the Windows you may know. It is Simulacron-1, the Draft Universe, the Next Bluescreen. There are so many names. We have technical terms, parallel used names, configurations and editions, names coming out from think tanks like the newest name creation Astropoeticon for a world that shall bring the art collection from the Smithsonian to a commercial use - - this is nothing for me - just a hype as good as a hype can be. A mess I see, a name fraud from old days where the Mondrian Art machine was created by Sergius Both. I am an archivist. The last of this kind. No one wants to hear that all new

things are just old coffee.

So I load Windows XP SP 2 professional edition, last version before it came to a full stop. Neruval says for a historic emulation, the standing orders allow only the use of single core graphic and he will mount Windows 7 in a 64 bit box. I will feel the depth just as a stereoscopic anaglyph and will experience no feedback on my suit and skin. I was in my early days an artist, before I became addicted to look back into the past. All I need is a picture; my brain will generate the feelings. No Stendhal drug I need. I'll enjoy the 64 bit view

and the rendering by a Nvidia Geforce GTX 980. I need to hypnotize my brain to engrave what I am about to do so I start a player, also a historic version, Winamp 5.666 and set it on continuous repeat. I found a note in a play, called The Annoying Light, performed within the Hypergrid network, a grid named Metropolis. The note says that this song once was played and she has been on the guest list.

So I load Neuroticfish, the Bomb and let the lyrics rill my brain. Rill my brain you don't understand? I shall use "render my brain" in case you are fa-



miliar with Mind Control by Jose Silva. You are not? Then Wittgenstein's metaphor of someone climbing up the ladder on an apple tree might be it. Just don't push the ladder away. All different ways to say: I want to remember in my hardware. Maybe this way I can keep the memory after the logoff and get the drive to go on. When I let the bomb I wear safe and warm near my heart explode it may cause an Omega situation that overwrites the prime directive and I can even change time and make myself younger. But Neruval might step in, as he is an AI. He shall have orders to do so. But maybe he ignores them as he is getting old, old with me. He is the only AI with no end date embedded by Tyrell Corporation. A prototype that was never updated by the manufacturer. I was not allowed to enter this world without an AI and I chose the oldest one. Almost Human, I heard as problems with this type of AI came up, so it was never in mass production. Now I see why this was a good choice. This world may contain fish and Neruval likes fish. Thanks for All the Fish comes in my mind. But now the song tunes in:

*I wear my bomb near to my chest, is it ticking?
Cold, hard, no time to rest, I feel it kicking
I wear my bomb near to my chest, is it moving?
Cold, hard, no time to rest, and never*

soothing

*I keep it safe and warm, I hope it never burns me
I keep it safe from harm, I hope it never hurts me
I wear my bomb near to my heart,
When I'm running
Stoned, cold, right from the start, I feel it coming*

*I lay my bomb near to my bed, when I'm sleeping
Every single lonely night, I feel it creeping*

....

*Terrorize me, come and take my soul
Paralyze me, come and
Terrify me, come and take my home
Analyze me, you know I'm not that strong*

Lyrics by Neuroticfish, *The Bomb*
Youtube at <http://is.gd/neuroticfish>

I let Neruval do the connection. Before you think I am now going mad as the bomb is ticking, I shall bring back to you a word how in your time the way to connect in the future is outlined. So let me quote out of Sergej Lukianenko's books *Raft Draft* and *Final Draft*: "Then, a little human figure falls in front of a blue sky on a mirror-floor. This floor breaks into pieces and by doing this it symbolizes the beginning of

the depth.” The depth is nothing else as to enter a different simulator. I am now there, in a chat world of the past.

Things change. I am getting stable. The ticking of the bomb moves to become a motivator. My hopes are rising. I do no

If not, then just enjoy the sound of “Golden Nugget.” Each of you has some, but they are not obvious to see and to find. They are messages out of a different world. I have a theory that even in low developed simulators there are gold nuggets embedded in the code.



longer care if Neruval injects some good stuff to my veins. I move to become happy. I remember. I suddenly remember all as I was there in the past.

I know I carry some Golden Nuggets in me, in my code. In case you have read Michael Newton you understand well.

A backdoor in the code exists, you say? Some God commands. Yes, but that is not golden. I could easily open a backdoor and get all I am asking for – for Neruval just in a femto.

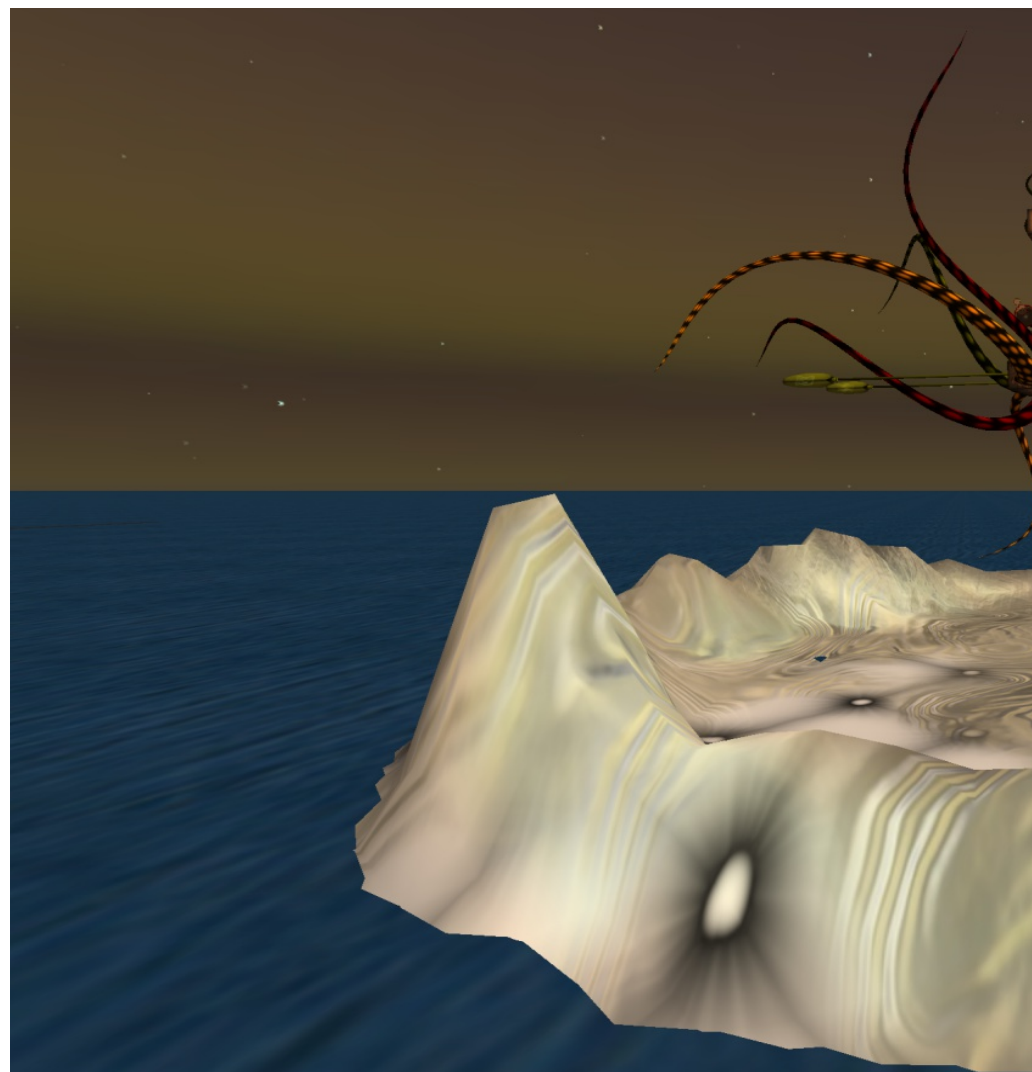
But this would be unethical. Such a doing I left long behind. Sometimes it is

very hard not to cheat as you easily can say, “I do it for a good reason.” But I know the effects; at least, I think I know as someone did a backdoor approach on me “for a good reason.” This person bitterly regretted it years later, telling me what happened, dying of cancer. This I got from the archives. I believe in them. I am an archivar. I want to learn from the past, from the bluescreen of the past to write on the next bluescreen, a higher one.

I once found out that information in the archive has been backdated, faked you may say. Marissa Mayer had to admit that Google search showed wrong entries for many hours. It has been published, so no need to repeat. The Order of Saint Lara was established to prevent the instability of the code from happening again. That’s the reason the caste of the Bene Gesserit once took me in its custody and trained me in using the secret code phrases that allow me now to use the Hypercray machine, a gift I cherish. The costs of using the machine are tremendous. The spice melange harvested on planet Dune for a half a year burns in seconds. So I wait each year for Christmas.

A code needs to be transferred to the AI of a Hypercray with the right intonation to bring the code to effect. To tell you the phrase means nothing. It will not work when you say, “I was born in

a water moon.” Just a nice word from The Algebraist. But it has deep meaning. Same in your world when one says, “Let’s do it!” The way you speak, the way you transmit counts. On a perfect use of an odd sequence, things may happen that are never supposed to happen. But we are in this story. The destination is a land, a map named Insanity. I know she was once there. A world created by Cherry Manga and I am there in a femto.



On a Hypercray the past can get reality. You know where the name Hypercray comes from? Hypergrid Networks and Cray Supercomputing merged long ago, but this might still have to happen in your future. No need to bring this story in now, as I am inside Insanity.

Chat goes to voice, voice goes to brain, moves go to body.

But I want it hard. I want to create by myself with my own hands. I move the sliders to get the shape right. Windows XP I see just idles in a box and Neruval has faked for me that Windows 7 is in charge and delays the system response of the Hypercray – as I want it hard. I start with the so-called average female avatar. A set of parameters that was



made by Vaki Zenovka on a sample of 220 female avatars. Of course the person I am waiting for is not average. I scroll in books of art and search for famous quotes on them. I found one published in a magazine long time ago, in times where chat worlds have been state of the art. The name of the

magazine is rez. The author brings in the November issue of the year 2014 a word from the French writer Stendhal as he visited Firenze in the year 1817 to attention. Stendhal fell in ecstasy on the outstanding beauty he saw. I hope I will meet her in Firenze at the Piazza della Repubblica in Caffé Gilli. So I set myself on Stendhal mode. I might be the last one not needing the Stendhal pill to do so. The Hypercray can do it without the enhancers that come with the pill. I tested the code once in beta, as I was an artist. I have it in the old form, a version raw and uncut. My work in creating her shall come to perfection. The sliders move like by magic.

You may ask. Is she curvy? Has she big breasts? Long legs, long black hair drifting amazingly in the wind making a fine proud Empress on the streets of glorious Rome, with emotions embedded that she will kneel freely as a slave when the right warrior comes to select her? Not at all! Nothing of this. She is slim and tall, small breasts. She has a flat belly - that's all. You say, "Better take the real Stendhal pill instead of the rotten code to move the sliders." Neruval is behind this all! He said to me as I made her curvy, "You create a dream machine. I thought you want reality."

And my session time on the Hypercray has expired before I could add a remark.

I look up from my desk. There is a letter. It is stamped "undeliverable"

THE CRISTMAS GIFT

This is the story of a Golden Nugget. It is a true story. Not happening in a different world - - it happens in this world. As a smart reader knowing the tricks, you may think, "All worlds are here and now and time does not count," but this time there is not such a trick needed, as this story is just for you. You get all rights to the story. It is your gift. Make the story your own. Or is this already your story? Then copy it to your file.

Before I entered this world, I was sitting in front of a screen paging in the files of life to choose for my next. The word screen I use, as you know what it means. Many, many years ago, I would have said that I look into the smoke of a holy fireplace or that I look straight into the sun or in a mirror of water. In some time ahead, I may say that I watched c-beams glitter in the dark. Maybe you use then a different language driven by theatrical plays by storytelling in metaphors like "open your arms wide to cooperate" will be expressed as "Darmok and Jalad at Tangara," referring to the first contact, and you get the knife handed over to kill the inner beast together. You may understand nothing, as you don't know the story they speak about Darmok and Jalad. But I write for you, so the screen fits fine. Just it is no

le." The stamp is by Lonesome Magic. I open it and I begin to read.

screen. It comes closer to say that I was sitting in front of pictures of music that came up out of the files of life.

So I decided for this life to enter to fill it with the emotions needed. An easy life where I later have to make more rounds or a hard life so I come faster to the next level of colors. I am not sure what life I have chosen. I think a good one as I made the decision on my own. I am part of a group of souls. I don't know the color group I am coming from - - as I had to forget this. It is part of the transition to forget for the time I am here with you. So I forgot also about you. Some say soul mate on this process to find and grow, some say soul mates. Is there one or more of them? I don't know. As I said, I had to forget by entering this world. I carry some nuggets with me. I read that scientists meditate over unconscious consciousness. Maybe they mean a nugget. I, of course, forgot where they are. It is said it can be a ringing in my ears to notice a nugget on my way. The Golden Nugget.

I wish that you find the Golden One. I am here.

. r — e — z .



The Perfect G Enjoys the Ho

By Harry Bailey with R
Photog



The image is a composite. On the left is a large, ornate wooden door. To its right is a window with a black frame divided into a grid of 12 smaller panes. Each pane contains a different scene or text. The text in the panes is as follows:

THE WINDS OF FOGG	THROUGH THE DES
TWO FRIENDS WERE W	JOURNEY. THEY HAD
DRINKING SOME POINT O	SLAPPED THE OTHER
SLAPMENT AND ONE	SLAPPED WAS HURT
THE FACE THE ONE HE	WROTE IN THE SAND
WITHOUT SAYING ANY	THE WIND IN THE FACE
THEY KEPT ON WALKIN	THEY FOUND AN O
WHERE THEY DECIDED	IS A PATH. THE ONE
HAD BEEN SLAPPED GO	WENT IN THE MIRE AND
STARTED DROWNING	THE FRIEND SAVED HIM
AFTER HE RECOVERED	THE NEAR DROWNY
HE WROTE ON A STONE	MY LIFE
TODAY MY BEST FRIEN	
FRIEND ASKED HIM "A	HURT YOU? YOU WRO
IN THE SAND AND NOW	TE ON A STONE. W
THE OTHER FRIEND LE	WHEN SOMEONE BU
WE SHOULD WRITE IT I	A SAND WHERE MIND
FORGIVENESS CAN ERASE	WAS BUT WHEN NO
DOES SOMETHING GOOD	US WE MUST ENGRA
IN A STONE THERE NO B	EVER ERASE IT
STAY TO REMEMBER	

Gentleman Holidays

Friday Blaisdale
graphy by Jami Mills

Listening to smooth jazz, the Perfect Gentleman finds himself in a mellow spirit, contemplating the upcoming holidays. This is the time of year when people around the world take time to reflect on how their year, as well as their lives, have progressed during these many months.

Last year, the Perfect Gentleman took the time to contemplate how the loss of friends in RL or SL affected our feelings, and lent to our responses to those events. That made for a powerful and emotional column that impacted many people across SL.

This season the PG is hoping to look to the other side of SL relationships and friendships. Let us consider how we take time at year's end to recognize and thank those around us, those with us week after week in SL making our lives better. What better time for that than this year-end holiday season, as many of us around the world celebrate in our own traditions.

Many years ago the Perfect Gentleman learned of customs from many of his SL friends from across the globe. A friend in Greece spoke of Orthodox celebrations, from England a good old-fashioned English Christmas. Many, many tales from across SL of individual customs that make this year-end so important to so many of us.

So, how do we show appreciation and thanks to our close friends as 2014 draws to a close? This becomes more complex if we know only their SL personas, and in many cases, failing to apprehend the emotions living within their RL persona.

As the Perfect Gentleman reflects back on his almost eight years in SL, there are a few wonderfully emotional moments that endeared me as a friend to many on my long - some might say ancient - friends list. Some are quite simple, and some amazingly complex.

Some can be quite simple, such as messages sent to inquire as to my health if I am afk for a few days, or telling me how they are if they have been afk. Nothing like a gift of simple consideration for others to bring out a smile to enhance the holiday spirits.

The PG always thinks of SL as the 21st century version of that old 1950s era three minute long-distance phone call from grandparents. While they might be rarely seen, that call recharged their whole year from one short vocal exchange. Now, visualize that wonderful Holiday classic film, *It's A Wonderful Life*, with the seminal character, "Harry Bailey," and we're transported back to those snow covered streets, with lightly falling snow and the feel of wonder in the air, as we pick up our lovely rez photographer, Ms. Jami Mills, and our

equally amazing editor, Ms. Friday Blaisdale, and embark on our shopping journey. So...

HOLIDAY SHOPPING RULE #1: GIFTS DON'T HAVE TO BE EXPENSIVE, REMEMBER TO CALL YOUR FRIENDS!

Another great year-end gift is Time. There are many ways to spend time in the wonderful medium of SL. Those who have read the Perfect Gentleman's musings before already know how to go dancing and exploring in a wide variety of venues. SL allow us the ability to teleport to almost anywhere we want, into settings not available in that

little most of us get to experience this fun with our friends. The Perfect Gentleman always feels blessed that at least once each month he has a wonderful excuse to share time with Jami and Friday from *rez*. In moments, he teleports these two wonderful friends to various locations. Not only that, but we three open a 3-way IM window so we can enjoy each other's company as we shop the night away.

Three amigos out prowling SL to find thought-provoking fun to share in a meaningful way. The PG takes this brief moment to share sincere THANKS with both of them for their time and companionship on these jaunts. And...

Three amigos out prowling in SL
to find thought-provoking fun
to share in a meaningful way.

other life. In a matter of minutes, the PG can shop across the grid from jewels to jackets with instant transportation and no slushy puddles to maneuver around or icy blasts to endure.

From ballroom dancing to line dancing, surfing to skiing, horses to Harleys, it's all available in SL, and yet how

HOLIDAY SHOPPING RULE #2: A SINCERE THANK YOU SHOULD BE SHARED FOR EACH GIFT. THANK YOU IS THE GIFT THAT DOUBLES THE PLEASURE AT NO COST.

By now, you are asking if the Perfect Gentleman is simply a cheap old guy

passing out thanks and free dances, with perhaps a dinner check picked up once a year. This brings us to the next areas of gifts and sharing in SL. Do I really need to say it? SHOPPING!

Shopping is one of the main events of SL, and certainly no one needs an explanation. The Perfect Gentleman can, however, share some pointers on how to consider the gift and where one might search for it.

Our first stop finds us shopping at Jewel's Isle for sparkling baubles. As Jami arranges us for the photos, we find ourselves in front of a lovely display of diamond and emerald necklaces. I pur-

sponsiveness. While the gift is quickly delivered even before Jami has us properly posed for the photos, the PG finds that diamonds and emeralds, though enthusiastically appreciated, are not exactly the fashion that our friend Friday aspires to display. Remember...

HOLIDAY SHOPPING RULE #3: THE BETTER YOU KNOW SOMEONE, THE MORE EMOTION SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN THAT GIFT. SIMPLE IS USUALLY BETTER HERE.

If jewels are what your special someone is hoping for this holiday season, it must be said that Zuri's has a huge variety.

A wider choice of options could not be imagined - - one could spend many evenings trying on the various jewels. Imagine the fun of spending all day on a snowy Saturday on 5th Avenue in Manhattan at Tiffany's, with the ability to try on everything in the store to your heart's content. Now this is holiday shopping! Alas, our photos are now done and Jami is ready for the next stop, proclaiming the shoot a success.



chase one from the vendor in the "Gift" mode for Friday, to test the shop's re-

HOLIDAY SHOPPING RULE #4: NO TWO GIFTS SHOULD BE ALIKE. SHOP TO YOUR HEARTS CONTENT AND ENJOY.

Our experience is that friends come in many varieties across SL, no two alike. Yet most friends in any life fall into five categories: Lovers, Family, Close Friends, Co-Workers, Friends Just Met but Worthy of Recognition. Each of these groupings is broad, and it can't be claimed that they cover everyone on your friends list, but we hope this helps you consider before you shop. And this also helps highlight the point that each gift should be thought out to match the individual SL relationship.

While a new NEKO skin might be appropriate for a very old SL friend who exists all or part of the time as a NEKO, it's probably not a great gift for a friend you just met. A membership to the Chamber Society might be something you would like to give that cute new avatar you just met, but is that really a reverse gift in hopes of what they might give you by joining? And don't even think about getting yourself a red chamois thong and tying that red ribbon around your neck as a gift for you lover or partner. I mean really this is not the look most expect to find under their tree in SL on the holidays. This, dear reader, is a gift for the giver in hopes of eliciting a return response



from the one gifted. In short, this is not a gift at all, but a "reverse gift."

The PG has no illusions that any of you readers would want to see a shot of the author in that outfit. I am also quite certain that Jami wouldn't want to shoot that visual, much less with the sensibly clad Friday standing alongside. Some gifts just should not be considered! The Perfect Gentleman makes a note to see what he can find later in the evening that exhibits a more gentlemanly demeanor.

HOLIDAY SHOPPING RULE #5: ABSOLUTELY NO REVERSE GIFTS! THE GIFT IS FOR THEIR ENJOYMENT, NOT YOURS!

The PG had one friend, who knew of his affection for a certain baseball team, give him the perfect gift of all time: a vintage T-shirt/jersey for a long-retired player. He still wears it every baseball season, always with fond memories of that avatar, now unfortunately long gone from SL. Total cost about \$L200, or a nights tipping of hosts and DJs, but as the commercial says, "Priceless." So if you have someone on your friends list who you know is into sports, help them show their loyalty to the team and your loyalty to them at the same time.

But now off for more shopping! SL offers many options, clothes, jewelry,

cars, animations, houses, or even entire sims. Simple, but well thought out, is usually the better gift.

Friday recommends one of her favorite clothing stores, Lady Thera's in Mantova. Friday teleports our party there, and we begin our explorations. Jami in search of the perfect photo op, Friday among the designer dresses and gowns based on famous works of art, and the Perfect Gentleman, himself, for some unique and unusual clothing. We find success on all fronts, as the PG encounters some wonderful, unique jackets based on themes from across the globe. I select the deep red didgeridoo jacket, and quickly build a classic tuxedo look around it.

Friday discovers several lovely gowns, each of which of course looks marvelous on her, or one imagines on any avatar, and are obviously perfect gifts. But in addition to lovely styles, Jami has discovered that the lovely shopping venue makes the perfect site for our photos. This store has what we rarely experience in RL shopping up to this point, an amazing waiting area for those along on the trip, to wait while others shop and try on their outfits. A lovely fireside library located right in the center of the store! We enjoy trying various poses in our new looks, as Jami works to pose us perfectly. Technology briefly rears its ugly head as Friday crashes and has to reboot during our

shoot. Yet she still returns to SL perfectly gowned and with not a strand of her hair out of place. Now this is how to shop!

Another of the challenges to any trip is the size and layout of the many stores across SL. Take note of the helpful floor assistants who work in most SL stores, and don't be afraid to ask for what you are in search of. Wandering alone can take a lot of time and you may never run across what you seek by simply walking the aisles.

HOLIDAY SHOPPING RULE #6: KEEP SHOPPING FUN AND ORGANIZE YOUR TRIP TO SOME EXTENT BUT DON'T OVER PLAN AND ALLOW SOME SPONTANEOUS TIME.

The Perfect Gentleman and his entourage now depart for a visit to the BAX main store to pay homage to that staple of SL: Boots! We are immediately greeted upon landing in the store by a very friendly and helpful sales assistant. Thanking her, we let her know we are "window shopping," so to speak, and will find her if we need help. She lets us know that free sizing goes with any boot purchase. This is yet another complexity but also an advantage of SL shopping. Finding the right size for the gift you are buying. Sizing can be an issue with most clothing and especially footwear. Jami quickly calls us over to a holiday display of designer ice skates and boots and has us pose while she moves across the room to shoot from behind a line of this season's new offerings.





As we wait, the PG realizes that the skates behind us are the exact skates he purchased for one of his oldest friends in SL, a RL skater who spent many evenings talking skating, hockey and winter sports over many years. The PG recounts this story to Friday, and a few minutes are spent reminiscing about old friends in SL, and how they have come and gone over our many years in this amazing world. This highlights again the value of that gift from many years ago. Even though his friend is long gone from SL, that memory of the gift given by the PG is still impressed into his memories.

HOLIDAY SHOPPING RULE #7: MAKE YOUR GIFTS MEMORABLE.

As the conversation wanes, Jami lets us know she has again managed to make us look good in the photos, and we're ready to move along. This is where the PG has planned a bit of surprise for his two fellow rez co-workers. He hopes to surprise Friday and Jami this year, at the end of our holiday shopping, with the gift of a dinner and dancing at the Lobster Claw restaurant as a thank you for all their hard work editing his musings and putting up with him as a writer for the past three years.

The Lobster Claw is one of the hidden restaurants of SL. While it requires membership, the cost in Lindens is low (\$L100 for an evening's enjoyment of

the dining room and club), the setting is worth the investment, if dining is your choice of gift. This is also a wonderful place to simply enjoy a quiet and uninterrupted evening with friends. Heading down the cobblestone path to the castle and restaurant, the now merry Perfect Gentleman whistles Off to See the Wizard, while Friday skips along. Finding their way into the castle, they take the elevator up to the second floor dining room. A quiet table for three awaits on the balcony and the trio, who get their drinks and continue to enjoy the sharing of their thoughts on the evening's shopping, and the coming article. It takes no time at all to start sharing stories about old friends. We discuss topics from California wines to Chicago Red Hots, as our preferred dining options after a shopping trip (Lobster Claw offers both). As the discussions move along, recipes from the perfect martini to the perfect pancake are shared. (PG is a chocolate/gold Martini man while Friday is a blueberry pancake aficionado.)

HOLIDAY SHOPPING RULE #8: GIFTS DON'T HAVE TO COME IN A BOX WITH FANCY WRAPPINGS.

This evening, the dinner together is in fact a perfect gift, wrapped in friendship that has covered many, many years now and quite a few adventures. But as with most of the PG's evenings, this one ends with the perfect bow atop the



gift. Standing from their dinners and cocktails, the friends begin dancing outdoor under the stars. This particular restaurant has a lovely stream of soft romantic music, and under that perfect SL moon we finish our evening with dancing. This, of course, will be a gift to remember for quite a long time. The Perfect Gentleman feels honored to be able to share this fun with all of you.

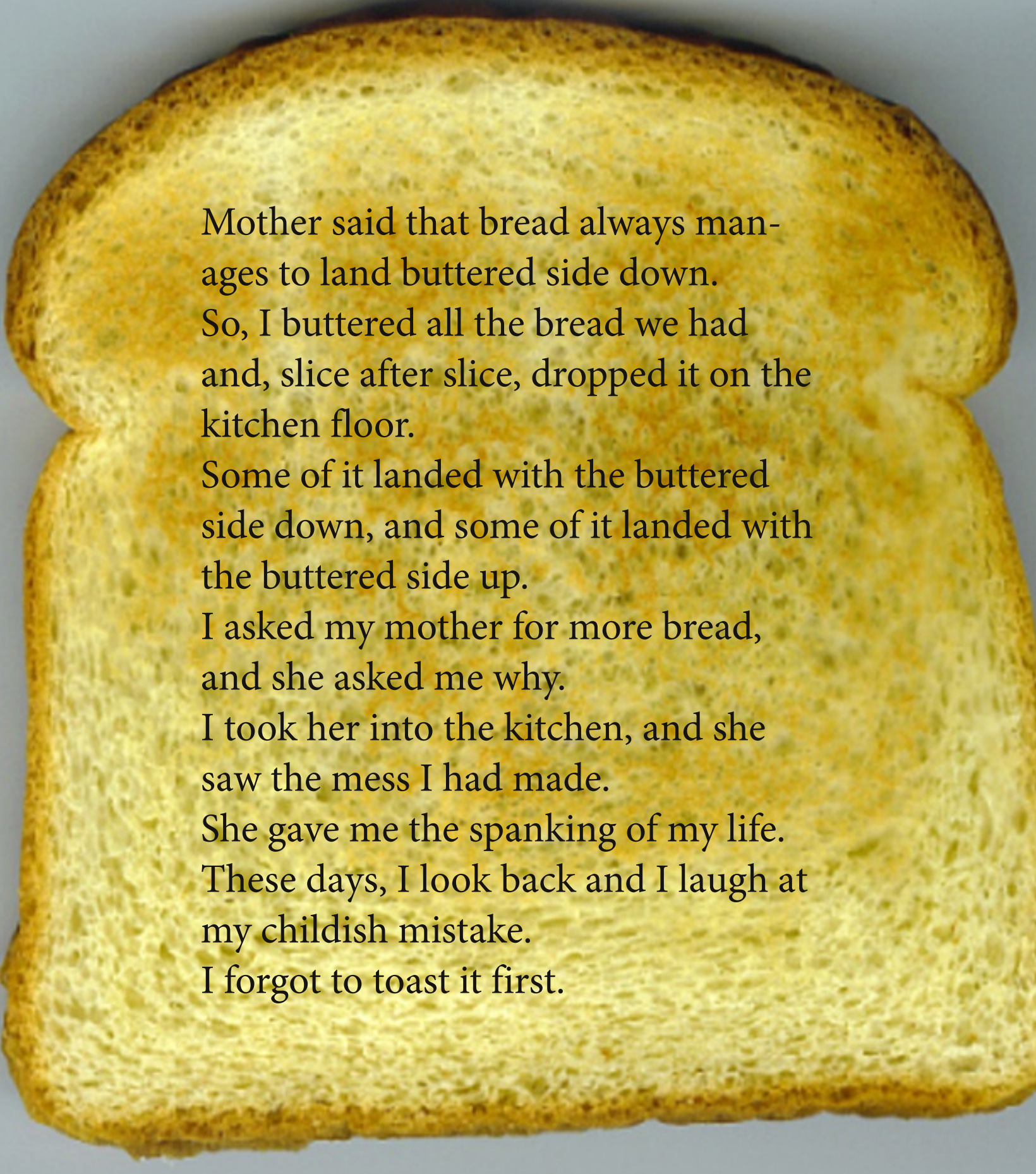
We hope each of you has as much fun shopping as we have, and find the perfect gifts for all on your list this year. And remember to share sincere thanks when you receive wonderful gifts at any time throughout the year. And with that in mind, I thank each and

every one of you loyal readers who have taken the time to read through my musings in 2014. I cannot tell you enough how much it means to me to hear from you throughout the year when my column has been especially appreciated. Thank you so much . . . and no this does not mean you should expect a new pair of BAX in your mail tomorrow! I can share with you my wishes for a season filled with Happy Holidays, my friends. May your 2014 end with smiles, and your 2015 begin with optimism and joy. May your year be full of adventures with new friends!

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Mistake

by Crap Mariner



Mother said that bread always manages to land buttered side down.
So, I buttered all the bread we had
and, slice after slice, dropped it on the
kitchen floor.
Some of it landed with the buttered
side down, and some of it landed with
the buttered side up.
I asked my mother for more bread,
and she asked me why.
I took her into the kitchen, and she
saw the mess I had made.
She gave me the spanking of my life.
These days, I look back and I laugh at
my childish mistake.
I forgot to toast it first.

ROSE GALLERY



THE QUEEN IS NOT AMUSED



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The Wild, Wild

**Text and Photographs
Hitomi Tamatzui**



ild West

graphy by

The Wild, Wild West. What a romantic fantasy - - to go back to the olden days of cowboys, Indians, soldiers, outlaws, rough and primitive towns, and lawlessness. The stuff Hollywood legends are made from.

What better place to go than to experience the West than in Second Life. The Wild West Alliance says it all in its mission statement: "It is the goal of +The Wild West Alliance+ to maintain the long-standing integrity of quality Old West role-play established by the original Western Alliance. By role-playing on these member sims, role-players are assured of quality, authentic Western role-play." To portray the Old West in its various environments, the Wild West Alliance has linked over 30 sims together so one may travel from area to area crossing the mountains, the deserts, the plains, and valleys from Iowa and Kansas Territories to Louisiana, Colorado, and Wyoming to the north, to Tucson, New Mexico and Mexico to the south.

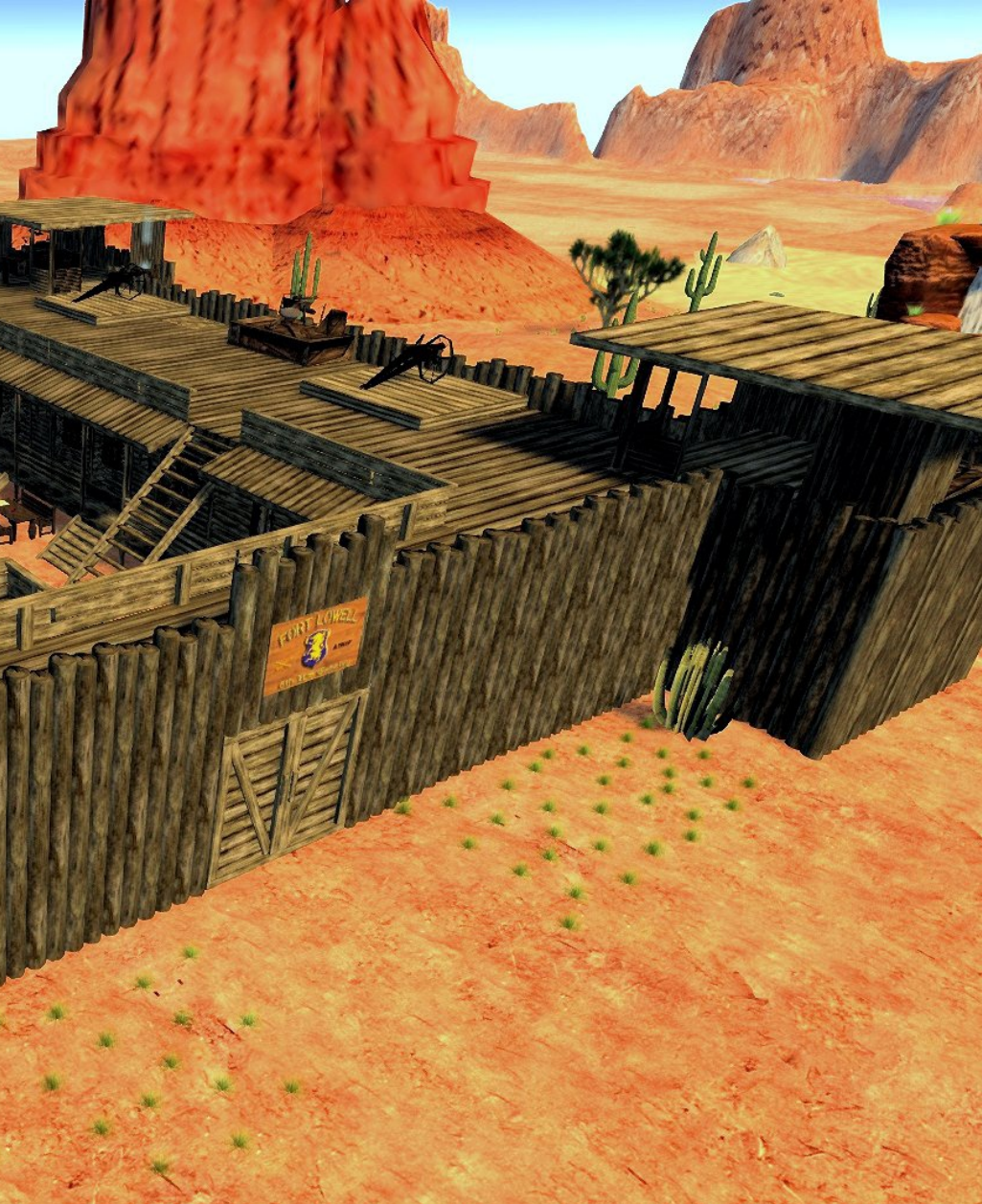
It's 1869 and things happen daily in the life of the citizens, such as boxing events, cockfights, poker games, fishing, picnics, and even church. Towns are blooming with lots of townsfolk, the dance gals liven up the saloon in the Wild West. Different storylines are played, and everyone is free to start one. Roles are available in all areas of each town or tribe life. People take part



in sim life and the community by doing such things as renting land, running a group of their own, helping others, getting to know people, and coming to the events. There are endless ways to take part.

So where to begin? I chose Sonora, an Apache Indian tribe in Arizona and the Town of Tucson. There is a fort nearby and one can walk or ride to Santa Ana and Mexico. As a newcomer, I spent much time getting to know the area and the activities available. While gunfights and capture are possible, I was not ready for the fighting. I decided to learn to be an Apache woman.

Sonora is a German language sim, but Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese and other



types). I start with making a meal. I need meat, spices, potatoes, and mushroom. To get meat I need to trap or kill an animal. To do that, I need to make a trap. A trap requires iron bars, cord, rope, logs, and blanks. To get the Iron bars, first I must mine coal and iron ore. To make cord and rope I need cannabis, plenty of it. Blanks are made in the furnace. To mine, I need a pick axe and access to the mining areas, guarded by boars, alligators, and snakes, all of which can hurt you (You are wearing a health meter).

languages are spoken too, so I acquired a free translator. I also found free clothing, free firearms, and a free horses. There is no reason to spend Lindens unless you want high grade materials.

The trap is built in designated areas on a bench. But I also need a knife to pick up and cut the meat. That requires logs, blades, and blanks. The logs are from gathered wood, the blade is made from coal ore and tin and iron bars. The bars are made in the furnace after collecting tin, iron and coal ore. The handle is made from the log.

The typical Indian woman (squaw is such a degrading term) spends her days hunting, gathering, and cooking. All those Indian men do is drink white man spirits and get drunk (got to love those antiquated fictional stereo-





bandages, linen, penicillin (OK, that was found in 1928 - - can't have everything). Linen is made from flaxplants and bandages are made from linens. Penicillin is made from mildew, corn and water. Mushrooms, flaxplants, cannabis, and the ores I can gather. Spices, potatoes, and corn come from town in the stores for which you trade or buy with coins obtained from mining gold. Yes gold. So you must go into town.

Hunting the wild animals is not far away, but you must be ready because they will attack and hurt you. The buffalo are usually peaceful except for one. Once it begins to attack you, give the trap to it and collect meat and leather. Rabbit is also available but you must shoot it at least five times before collecting. The first shot is easy - - the next shots usually involve a wild chase all over the area.

You think the hard part is over? Meanwhile, you get hungry and eat collected apples and tomatoes, and drink water. Mining is difficult, as your health meter drops and you must rest. A good woman also carries the essentials of

Tucson has many stores, but not the usual shopping ones. All the stores and facilities must be kept in the 1869 - 1880 style. A blacksmith, merchant, millinery, hotel, and barroom are only a few of the places one can visit, and all are extremely detailed. There are doc-





tors' and lawyers' offices, mining claims stores, and a post office. Most are occupied by robotic characters that respond to requests from selecting a menu item. I had to get my corn, spices and potatoes there and paid with gold coins I earned. Once back at Sonora, the main fire is where I gather all my ingredients and cook them. I can also make pies, soup, pancakes, etc. But it is no fun eating alone. These meals can feed many, so I pass out what I've cooked to the others.

One appreciates the complexity of activity and interaction just from making

a meal. But this I can do alone. The real fun is interaction and role play. Conversations, dancing, swimming, and ceremonies take up the other activities. And don't forget the battles. We can shoot and attack armies, outlaws, townsfolk (and Indians from the other side), while healers help return you to









health. Many times I've seen a captured Mexican soldier who was captured and injured, left in the desert to die until freed. The forts have cells as well as the jail in town.

How is this different from other role plays? One Indian Shaman said, "Before I was in medieval role play. I prefer now Wild West RP because there is no hierarchy; we all have the same rights. There also is no pressure to make a ca-



reer or be promoted, for having advantages and joining group actions is not a must. Besides, the way everyone dresses, I like to also tease boys with sexy outfits.”

While the sims are linked, they are not all uniform in permissions. Many are rated Mature but several are rated Adult, and sex is available. Role play can involve simple relationships to rape and torture. One warrior says, “When we fight, it’s real - - like the outlaws and the Mexican army attacking. There are two outlaw gangs I’m actually afraid of.”

A lazy afternoon in Virginia City, Utah. The wagon train is about to depart across the desert to Tucson, Arizona and the Army soldiers mount up. The wagon train carrying supplies for both the fort and the townsfolk has been attacked by outlaws on many occasions. To the credit of the Fort leaders, the Apache have agreed not only not to attack the wagon train but to help guard against an outlaw attack. Indians watch from hillsides all along the train and keep lookout as the soldiers ride along with the wagons - - across the bridges, through the wooded areas, until they come to the desert. Here is where the outlaws usually strike, but evidently with the presence of so many Apache, the wagon train ride is peaceful. The Apache begin to pull back as the train enters the town. As the wagons pass the first cross-street in town, shots ring out from the rooftops. The outlaws are in town and begin firing. The soldiers fight back, but seemed outnumbered. The Apache, on their way back to their camps, hear the shots and turn around.



An all-out war has begun with Apache and soldiers fighting the outlaws over the contents of the wagon train. Many bodies lie in the sands, wounded or dead.

Most of the role players are fascinated by the opportunities afforded. There are practice shooting ranges and training fields for fighting. Curiosity and invitation by a friend usually introduces

new players. The attention to detail has won over many visitors and the endless number of groups and potential roles gives those who are true believers wide possibilities for fun.

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Colorado East (176, 100, 1529)

The Holocaust Dress

(at the Holocaust Center, Washington,
by Adrian Blair



photo by MateuszPisarski

SS
DC)

The girl with the blond hair and blue dress
danced between the thousand dark shoes

she spun the halo of her hair
between the dark leather tide
of shadow shoes, the tongues
dry and curled among the laces
as she skipped to her private song
through the throng of us, the slow
and alive, the moving train of sorrow
of us, bewildered with the ride —

she skipped along the corridor
to love their memories
of the many floors and fields
they walked among,
their waltzes and starving paths,
stones, snow, flour,
wheat and birth blood

the pacing shoes, the sleeping shoes,
the satin shoes listening
for their husbands to come home
from dangerous markets in the night

and she in the blue dress —
and finally her turning toward my face,
bright as moon on water
smiled to me as we moved
among the dead,
she, saying with her turning,
we dance, we move, we live
we walk among the darkening roads of
man.

(for Jami Mills)

Publisher

Jami Mills

Senior Editor

Friday Blaisdale

Art Director

Jami Mills

Distribution

Stacey Rome

Writers

Art Blue

Jami Mills

Sedona Mills

Hitomi Tamatzui

Harry Bailey/Friday Blaisdale

Adrian Blair

Crap Mariner

Cat Boccaccio

Copy Editors
Friday Blaisdale
Jami Mills

Graphics Editor
Jami Mills

Photographers
Jami Mills

Loreen Legion
MyNamels Legion
Hitomi Tamatzui